



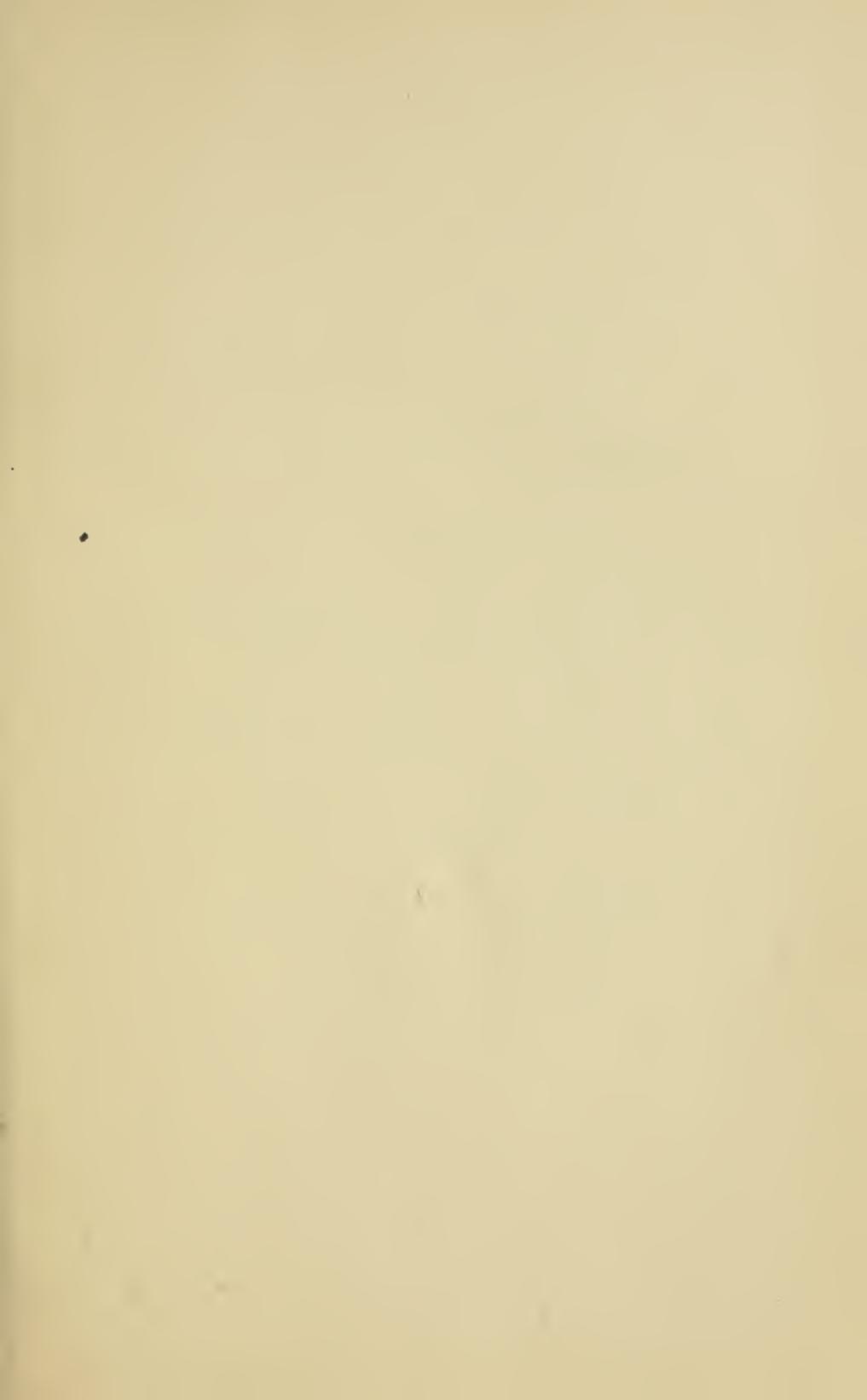


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THE SPIRIT OF LOVE
AND OTHER POEMS

Charles Gibson



The
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AND OTHER POEMS

by

CHARLES GIBSON
"



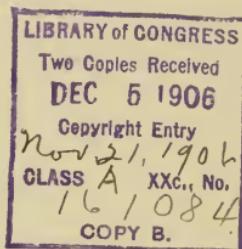
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THE SPIRIT OF LOVE



DEDICATION

To those who love, yet ne'er have known
Whence their true love hath strangely grown;
To those whose hearts do hear withal
Celestial voices sweetly call,
From far on high, new thoughts of love,
That lift their very souls above;
To all who love, or sad, or gay,
To these I dedicate my lay.

1896.



The SPIRIT OF LOVE

I

O TRUTH! there must be some such thing as
Love.

The poets breathe its life; the minstrels sing.
But I have known it not, alas, for me!
And those for whom I felt some passing strain,
Some blind intoxication twine the heart;
Ah! They have fled or vanished through the air,
Each hour when I had thought their Love was
near!

But yet there must be some such state on
earth,

Some power to elevate and to adore
One other being; thus to lift above
The fact of life and the familiar way.

That some one hath strange power within this
world,

To make earth Heaven and Heaven sublime, I
know;

But yet where is she; yea, when may she come?

II

Through the world I wander,
I find not what I seek;
Yet I seek and wander.
Those I would most love
Would not of me, that speak;
Yet I long for Love.

I long, for now my soul still languisheth.

Some unknown spirits of the air are they,
Those beings who may give me happiness ?

I know not; yet I sigh for their sweet ways.

I love them; but alas! too true the thought;
Whene'er I tear these mists from off mine eyes,
They vanish; they are gone; and I remain.
For so it is with those who live below;
That they shall weep with life's unending load.
And yet I cry at times; I weep and mourn,
Lest I shall ever wander on my way,
Without this Love that I would soon discover.

O Thou to whom the hearts of men are known,
Thou who dost guide their steps to sacred
halls,

I pray Thee tell me where my love doth spring!
Thou knowest those on whom it e'er may
fall,

Who feel the breath of Love, within their souls,
Panting in rapture for its placé on high.
O Thou Dear One, the font of human joy,
I pray Thee send one soul to make me glad!
Thou sendest! At the thought of such a state
I am transported by those sounds that sing
Of some new happiness and music.

III

There are strange things that bring this sweet
desire,
To draw some other being near the soul.
We cast aside the sorrows of our lives,
And leap out into the unknown, new-born;
For there our dreams of youth assume their place.
The soft, sweet season brings its own caress,
Thus to transport us through the heavenly air.
We live in Love's untutored bliss, confined
In some unending hour 'twixt Light and Shade.
Time is divided in an unknown space,
That knoweth not of haste nor toil nor woe.
O Peace! Now hast thou come within my soul!
No longer am I bound by the cold chains
That tear my empty heart. Peace, thou hast
come

Within some garden fair, some soft retreat!
Oh, well may I rejoice that it be here,
In the sweet dream of an intoxicating love!
Oh, well may I sip honey like the bees
That fly within the mid-day sun full warm,
And there rejoice that Time shall hold them
not!

Come, let us away and likewise;
To dance upon the moonlight stream,
Where waters sparkle;
To sink beneath them,
And to rise again,
Man made with God,
An unintelligible thing withal,
To those that are not made for lives of Love!

IV

To sing upon the bank,
And laugh with thee,
Were enough sweetest of all things, to thank
Simplicity, thy gift to me.
To run a race within the rushes,
Finding my loved one in the bushes
Of some soft arbor — skip and play!
'T is a bright and sunny day!

Come, let us find a fountain clear,
Where we may sit and listen, dear,
To the "drip, drop," of waters still
Endeavoring to fill
A basin, with its marble row
Of caryatides below.

Come, light Spirit, skip and play,
'T is a merry day!
Shades of eventide draw near:
Rest thy sweet head upon mine ear;
That nodding, I may hear the sounds,
If in thy sleep a shadow frowns,
To take thee back to streets and towns,
Then will I away, away,
And bring thee back again to day.

Is it not, then, more than joy
Once again to play the boy,
Once again with Life to toy?
Ah, happiness without alloy!
Come, let us tell to one another
Half the secrets of a lover;
Half to-day and half to-morrow;
Aught of joy and naught of sorrow;
Whisper in each other's ear
All we feel, and wish, and fear.

('T is a kiss upon thy brow;
'T is what lovers all allow.)

Oh, Thou art indeed a fay,
With affection thus to play!
But were I the God of Love,
Would I not hover far above,
And lighting on thee like the dove,
Would show thee his sweet way.
Yet again my kisses shower
On thy lips in this sweet bower,
Where the nightingale doth sing;
Tiny birds upon the wing
Songs of summer to us bring.
So, light Spirit, skip and play!
For 't is a merry day!
Let us run the lover's race,
Bees or butterflies to chase,
Hither, thither, through the air,
Seeking honey everywhere.
Ah, sweet one, there is a breath
Of Heaven in thy joy that saith:
"Come to live with me for aye,
One half the mortal, half the fay."
Thus do we laugh, and sing and love.
Am I alive, or shrined above?

V

Tell us those fairy hours, when in our youth
We lost the frequent train of common thought,
That carries all men toward convention's fate;
And found ourselves alone with Love's ideal,
In some unknown and sunny way, that leads
Far, far from the enticing haunts of men.

A soft, dim light shed radiance over all,
And slowly we emerged in Godlike form.

But suddenly there came some note of scorn;
And in a moment all was fact again.

Our sweet imagination still returns
Into the cold and stilted forms of life.

There are strange moments in our onward march,
When these dull things of earth shall come to
pass.

And must we ever wander thus alone;
Or shall we find our mystic happiness ?
Shall we return to darkness and despair;
Or may we pierce in time the heavy gloom,
And thus emerge into the silvery light ?

Strange are these thoughts, to hold us as we
dream

Our way, o'er the world's wide expanse of life!
The imagery of bliss conceals her face,

Until one day she bursts upon our gaze,
And we arise to Heaven in mortal frame.

For weary cycles of evolving years,
Thus may we wait till we shall live; and yet,
As we approach those portals of our joy,
All care, all misery, and all woe the while,
Fade from our gaze, and we behold our love!

VI

Whispering, is heard a voice,
Bidding our souls at last rejoice:

“Hours dark in lonely places,
Filled with stern and angry faces,
Spent in agony or woe,
Fade away as on we go.
Hard, unfeeling, unrelenting
Natures now are near repenting.
Half in play, yet half in fun,
Our life and love have just begun!

Tripping o'er the silent grass,
(Where bushy thieves do swiftly pass),
We may find some gentle spring,
Where birds above us oft would sing.
Oh, let me thus entwine mine arm
About thee, to protect from harm

Thy tresses falling in the wind
That through the forest oft we find.
Oh, let me here imprint the sign
Of lovers — more to me than wine,
Or fair ambrosia from the sky —
Upon thy lip, and let us fly
As old Time plays his merry tune
Upon the fast departing moon.

Suddenly to pause and ponder
O'er some tiny stream,
Wherever fancy points the finger;
Thus mayhap to dream:
There are no higher powers o'er us,
Who shall say thee nay;
There are no pleasures oft before us,
More than Nature's way.

Come, honeyed flower,
My loved one, come!
Rest us within this peaceful bower,
And let us sleep like some
Who know but innocence, and seem
Softly to drink and dream.

VII

O night, thou comest over our remorse:
Thou sendest us to join dark shades beneath.

Thou windest shrouds of love about our path,
And we become in time half dumb, half blind.
We know our fate, and weep in misery
That it should hang within the future's scale,
While we repine, imprisoned in our youth.

Our fettered life still lingers in its cell,
Ere we may wander forth and find our own.
Time passes on; our jailers may not go.
Years cover our heads, and we remain
Upon this threshold of our destiny.
Oh, turn, ye hours of pain, from deep despair,
Covering our souls with canopies of hope!
Pass o'er the silent current of our life,
And bring to us new harbingers of light!

Some soft pale votaries of day appear,
To steal into a dawn that breaks beyond.
Dark shadows sink; and we arise in truth.
Lo! Night is at an end! Our life is here!

Sweet one, sweet one, I hear a sound:
A buttercup shines o'er the ground,
A golden goddess from her mound.
She steals into our drooping eyes,
And lashes suddenly unties.
A ray of sunshine peeps between

Some leaves of purple-tinted green.
Lo, Phœbus to Aurora springs!
The night has taken to her wings.
A lark has risen with the sun.
The owl's allotted time is done.
Some songs are ringing in the ear.
Come, love! Another day is here.

SONG I

“Away with our dark repining;
Night is to the day resigning;
Off with weeping and despair;
For Life and Love fly through the air!”

SONG II

“To rise upon a bed of moss,
And sleep from our eyelids toss;
To gaze into belovéd eyes,
And know simplicity is wise;
To sink beneath the sparkling pool,
Where life is watery and cool;
To sport upon the bank is well.
And Heaven our simple joy shall tell.”

VIII

Stay! shall we linger o'er the grass;
Or fly toward sunny shores, and pass
New days in our untutored bliss,
Where breezes soft the brow shall kiss?
Shall we remain to drone or fly?
Shall we, dear one, live thus, or die?

Oft 't is our fate through life to choose
Between Love's vict'ry, or to lose
Half happiness, half joy of all
We feel; and to obey the call
Of our own dark, degrading pool,
Casting aside some higher goal.
And yet sweet voices call the heart,
Each hour that we would fain depart.
Each hour that we draw forth the sword,
There comes from each some lingering word,
Some note that sings: "Remain, remain!"
While we were best in warrior's train.

O moths that flutter 'neath the light,
Why beat those wings that ne'er should fight?
Why, in his hours of bliss should fay
Become poor man, to toil by day?

Stay but one hour! We 'll laugh, my love!
And join those realms of joy above,

Where none do spend their days in woe:
Nor burn vain fire, nor slay vain foe!
Here may we rest us side by side,
And view the Sun's departing, ling'ring bride.

Within these bowers of emerald hue
We twain shall sip the evening dew,
Where flowers and leaves delight to dwell,
Where ferns do line some shady dell.
And there our love shall find the way
From heart to soul, that winds each day
New garlands round the hours of May.
Come thus, my love; come, sip the dew
Beneath these bowers of emerald hue.

IX

For as we pass those vales of bliss,
At each new branch our eyelids kiss.
As moss-grown stones their charms attend,
With many a joy our day shall wend.
With many an half-grown fear we flow
Through forests, where the wind doth blow,
And where our hearts lock with each hour,
This sacred stream of heavenly Power.
Oh! long may we remain in Love,

Here through the waning hours to rove,
Where'er dim Fancy leads her swains
Of passing moods and wak'ning strains!
Where'er these flowers of loveliest green,
Where'er their light or shade shall screen
Our evening blush, our morning bride,
Long shall thy blessings there abide!

For were not Venus well repaid
To weep for fair Adonis' shade;
To once have known eternal joy?
Anemones her pains employ.
With wind-swept consolation torn,
'T is best to love though we shall mourn!

Oh, change our fate, thou guardian Time,
From liquid plain to sparkling wine,
From dark'ning years to days of light;
From griefs and fears to features bright!
I'd rather know one hour of Love
Than years of riches, thrones above!

And say'st thou not so, Sweetheart,
That death our pleasures ne'er shall part?
Nor peace nor war the silvery train
Of our enraptured being pain?

Come hold these boughs above the head,
Where Gods with Goddesses do tread,

To give to all who lay their heart,
Entwined with Joy's erotic art,
High o'er sweet Cupid's flowering fane,
Where Hymen lays the heavenly train!
With feasts Olympus shares our life,
While Jove descending joins his wife.
With strains of music hold these boughs,
That we may swear eternal vows!
Hark! Where these groves their lights impart
To Gods or fairies, as they start
To cast all care from off their brows,
Their magic kisses Jove allows.
Hark! For the chorus sounds aloud.
Immortal wingéd creatures, bowed
With joyous hymns or praises cry;
Their lutes, their pipes beside them lie.
They feast, they gambol, as they sing,
Striking the earth upon th' extended wing.

Here Juno turns the peacock's wreath,
While Iris' colors rain beneath.
And Vulcan with the sunbeam's ray,
These fairy showers would fain portray.
With songs, with symphonies around,
Celestial revels here abound.

Come, Janus! 'Ope' thy portals wide,

That we may enter with the tide!
These feasts of Eros make me glad,
And wake my Amatoriad!

X

Pipe up, old Pan, thy tuneful lay,
And cheer the earth's departing day;
For our delight shall scarce begin
Till these faint beams of light grow thin.
"These beams of light grow thin!" we cry.
But when through light did Cupid die?
By moon, by sun, by light, by shades,
My love shall live through radiant glades!
My heart would join celestial airs,
That sleep within ethereal lairs!

For all that men may say or do,
Nor once would I be found untrue;
Nor once should hours pass by in vain,
If thou didst cry to aid thy pain.

Come, dream, Erato, o'er our grove;
Do thou recall sweet lines of love.
These boughs shall wave above our heads,
While Venus fair Hyperion leads.
Wave off the dawn, ere we shall fly
From this fair mount where none may die!

O creature who art born to-day,
To die to-morrow, go thy way.
If thou hast known one thought of Love,
Thy soul shall float through fields above!
For our first hours of joy are aught,
And pain or tears indeed are naught
When we have tasted fire divine,
That sparkleth more than foaming wine;
Yea, more than wine or perfumes fed
By leaves from off the violet's bed!

Now fades the world, its evil ways,
With toils and torments of our days;
Now vanish years of longed-for rest,
When we have felt our spirit's test!
By man came man; by God came Love,
That we might all partake thereof.

And ye who err; our hearts may dwell
With gentler pity o'er the cell.
If they have once but known thy fire,
All men shall tune this sacred lyre,
Whose strains do reach the human breast,
Whose dirge these weeping eyes attest.
If e'en from Adam all may fall,
From Eve, O prude, likewise recall
That thou who sendest men to Hell,

Oft in thy polished conscience fell!
For if this sacred fire doth burn,
How may we well its victims spurn?
Hark! All do sin through many a way;
If ne'er before, then first to-day!
And, human kindness pouring forth,
Light all our lives upon this earth!
The Gods make less of lover's crimes
Than one where virtue but begrimes!

Behold! Life's curtain falls. And we
Stand forth disclosed, where all may see;
And thou, cold virgin, who wouldst cry
'For shame,' from off thy tribune fly!
Nor judge, nor shall ye e'er condemn,
Till death these tides of human life shall stem.

1896-1898.



ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE ¹

O OFFSPRING of Apollo and the Muse;
Tuned in sweet melody, thy lyre
Lies o'er the ground; the airs diffuse
Fancies of magic fire.
Mortals around thee gather oft,
Charmed by thy love-awak'ning strains;
And beasts that once were wild are soft,
Held in harmonious reins.
With thine enchanted song the trees
Bend in new grace, thy music to employ;
They fan the heavy-laden breeze.
The rocks relax, in an untutored joy.

Ah! Thou hast found new notes of life,
New sounds of vernal love,
That wake, thus to receive thy wife
Within the shrines above.
But hark! These nuptials to attend,
The Gods in chorus bring

¹ The story of Orpheus and Eurydice has been treated by both Virgil and Ovid, and may be found in their translations.

Their songs of praise, their charms to lend,
Their omens, with the ring:
And hymns arise through perfumed airs,
That join with pure celestial prayers.

Yet, with each blessing, Hymen throws
Some note to chill the vein,
Speaking of cares, of future woes,
Of joys whose light shall wane.
His very torch doth smoke the skies,
Bringing deep tears into the eyes.
Alas, these omens fraught with fear
Bring fair Eurydice to die,
E'en in those days where Love should cheer
Its objects 'neath the 'nubial sky.
When wandering with the nymphs, her own,
She meets with Aristæus, seen
Through branches of the forest grown
With ivy and with shadowy green.
Alas! O fair ill-fated maid,
Wooed thus within the mournful glade,
Do thou make haste to turn beyond
These shepherd glances, far too fond!
Do thou regain thy lord's sweet breast,
And there in arms of Orpheus rest!

Make haste, Eurydice, to flee,
Ere nymph and God thy ruin see!
Oh, thou wert better turned to stone,
Than through dishonored passion won!
Turn thou, in fear, from these thick groves,
And seek the soul that thee most truly loves.

But wert thou swifter than the air
That blows sweet Orpheus' strain,
I know not how thine own despair
Could stay the fatal train.
Wounded upon the foot, poor nymph,
Thy flight is turned to swoon,
To death, to death! alas, no lymph
Shall bear to thee its boon!
Ah! Curs'd be the day that saw thee fade,
Far from the eye to join th' eternal shade!
"Alas, belovéd one!" she cries,
"Hast thou no knowledge of my fate?" And
thus she dies.

Orpheus in frenzied grief divine,
Pours his sad music to the shades sublime,
And through the airs his magic-wak'ning strain
In new melodious harmony winds out its train.

The Gods take pity on the mournful soul,
And Orpheus sues to seek grave Pluto's goal.

A cave near Tænarus, the world's high helm,
Leads to the entrance of the Stygian realm.
Oh, fearful sight! that there shall greet the eye,
Thus to proceed, the weeping Orpheus nigh!
Through crowded phantoms (earth's departed
souls),

Through depths of Tartarus, whose secret holes
Lie deep within its subterranean knolls;
And by that dog whose snake-like hair descends,
A wriggling cluster o'er three heads — it lends
Some poisoned semblance to Medusa's face —
Up to the throne that Pluto's Queen would grace!
There did Proserpine recline beside
Her Lord, and Orpheus' fairest strain deride.

Yet sang he songs of true and mightier love,
Than e'er incited man who lives above
To deep descend into the realms of death.
“A serpent hath Eurydice of breath,
Divine and true, of life so sweet deprived,
Whence hath my breast this greater grief de-
rived.

Oh, hear me then, Gods of the under-world,
Around whose throne the Agonies lie curled!
For Love, for Love's own fair, unsullied shrine,
Permit these arms my wife once more t' entwine!"

At these soft sounds, half with his Lyre attuned,

The Gods through Orpheus' strain in joy communed.

The ghosts shed tears adown their white-robed forms,

The thirsty Tantalus no longer storms,
And e'en Ixion's wheel rests firm and still.

The daughters of Danäus cease to fill
Their sieve with water. Sisyphus lies tamed
By music's veil! Eurydice is claimed!

Forth, from the shades new-found, she wanders forth.

Oh, triumph of fair Orpheus' truest worth!

Limping she comes, her wounded foot the while,

Shielding as best she may with woman's wile.

And Orpheus falls upon her neck in tears

Of joy most rapturous, mingled yet with fears
Lest his sweet wife to earth shall still refrain
From passing, and in Pluto's realm remain.

“Ah! Mine own flesh! should we not pass be-
yond

The boatman Charon, glancing, e'er too fond
Of thee, thy pardon now I crave before
The fatal path we take, and close the door.
Now shall we leave these dimly trodden halls,
Seeking a sunny world, through ghostly walls.
Yet while we travel o'er these sombre ways,
The moments shall extend to hours or days
Until the price of freedom shall be paid,
When I may look once more upon my maid.
Follow, sweet wife, then follow near my form,
That thy true love may cheer, and keep me
warm.”

His lyre upon his arm, his wife behind,
The radiant Orpheus leads, the Gods to mind.
And on through many a passage dark and worn,
His footsteps now are heard — and now are
gone.

At last the outlet to the upper world

Is seen beyond. Afar his fears are hurled!
In youthful triumph at such joy regained,
His reason told not that some space remained.
In thoughtless love, he turned to reassure
His heart that love was ever near and pure.

Oh, fatal moment of delight thus torn
From Fate inexorable! All is gone!
All lost, all faded from the sight away!
Eurydice has vanished ere the birth of day!
With arms extended for one last embrace,
Her form is wafted from the tragic place,
Again returned to chasms of the dead!
Again the portals close above her head!
Alas! Poor Orpheus! Sing thy dirge anew.
The Loves shall hear thee; but the Loves are
few.

Where Pluto reigns the shades do dwell beside
A sombre throne, that greets no living bride.
One disobedience to its laws imposed
Shall turn to warfare souls that were reposed.
One error o'er man's passage to the light
Shall cast in Heaven its vision from his sight.

1899.

HERO AND LEANDER ¹

IN Abydos there dwelt a youth divine,
Fair as the Gods,— a form with noble line.
In stature tall, his bearing moulded grace
With manly attributes and radiant face.
High o'er his head there rose the star of Fate,
Bearing immortal fame, yet fame too late;
Casting its magic rays about his youth,
To wreath in pain the lines upon his mouth.

O fair Leander, fanned by Hero's smile,
Happy art thou while free from Neptune's wile!
Not yet the God of seas and oceans hath
Meted to thee the measure of his wrath.
Not yet th' advancing years their watery train
Of journeys brought, for Pluto's final gain!

Thy loved one lives beyond Europa's shore.
Hero the priestess Venus would adore,
And in her God-like beauty, bathe in songs
The shrine of Sestos, that to her belongs.

¹ Compare *The Loves of Hero and Leander*, translated from the Greek of Musæus, by Fawkes. (Chalmers' *English Poets*, vol. ii.)

Thus Hero's beauty Asia's son endears,
And Love, in conquering, conquers all his fears.
He seeks to pass the swiftly moving strait,
That would divide him from his chosen mate,
And in youth's energy his limbs extend,
To breast the waves his arms would nightly
bend.

Trembling with love, he plunges to the deep,
His form submerged, the billows round him leap.
The distant shore a gentle light extends,
As thus to Love encouragement it lends.
O fair Leander, plow these treacherous waves!
Leap through the ocean to the shore it laves!
There, wandering near the beach, her duties o'er,
Steps Hero loved; now lingering no more.
Her eyes with dewy spray lie half encased,
Her heart no mortal suitor has defaced;
While from the tower is reared a burning torch,
That guides Leander to the temple's porch.
Awake, O Eros, and defend this youth
Who braves the sea, to seek thy fane, forsooth!

A cry fair Hero gives. She holds the brand
All burning yet within her quivering hand.

She leaves the tower, and toward the sloping
beach

Twines her swift way, Leander soon to reach.
While he, full dripping with sea foam and weeds,
Arrived on Sestos' shore, no beacon needs.
In arms of love, half moist as yet with spray,
He folds his mistress, and remains till day.
Then must the priestess Venus' altar burn;
Her lover e'en to Abydos return!

Again, when even-shades are pierced with light,
And golden rays fall from the torch so bright,
Th' heroic youth his watery passage makes;
Again new pleasures from dear Hero takes.
Nightly, the joys of Love first brought to man,
Reward in sacred airs Leander's plan.
The Hellespontean flood he nobly plows;
And Hero's long embrace fair Fate allows.

Oh, with what joy those moments pass in
air

It seems; so shall the Gods declare
That Eros new delights may give to man,
And cheer with Love's own warmth this treach-
erous span!

Sad then the thought, that Heaven to earth
should come;

But to depart and leave an empty home!

Oh, gravest hour that darkens life! I'd cry
In pain unstayed, when love from love must fly!
When Death, th' insatiate reaper, lifts his scythe;
In grief unutterable man shall writhe!

Tears shall gush down the maiden's rosy cheek.
Such anguish e'en the strongest heart would
break,

That pierces to the soul's bright azured realm,
And in its course the very skies would taint and
overwhelm!

One night a tempest rose; the sea grew rough,
While yet Leander sank within its trough,
And lab'ring fiercely there, he strained each
nerve.

Yet to no purpose would his effort serve,
While Neptune angered strove against his
strength.

Like to be a feathered victim in its length,
Each wave that bore him high soon cast him
down

Full many a fathom deep, left there to drown!
Ah, Venus! Stretch thine arm from Sestos' shore,
And, in sweet pity, unto life restore
This ardent lover, battling thus with death,
Sown in dishonor, now raised in perfect faith!
Hast thou no power to stay the fatal storm,
That carries mis'ry in its low'ring arm,
Nor love for Eros' vot'ries, yet to cast
This trident from the tempest's maddening
blast?

Alas! The priestess! She has left the shrine,
To seek Leander 'neath the conquering brine;
There to deplore the Fates' unwonted woe,
That would deprive her of the joys they know.
Despair and agony and grief are marked upon
Those heavenly features that Leander won.

Take then thy prey, O watery realms! Alone,
The maiden shall remain o'er sand and stone!
Those tears of grief, that flow in dewy length
The beach along, bear witness to thy strength.

Now Love shall in its noontide parted be!
Dead in his youth, Leander rides the sea!

A lifeless form, his beauty marred by pain,
The waves have washed him to Europa's main.
And Hero from her tower, alas, beholds
The ocean's shroud that her beloved-one folds,
In passion's deep disconsolate embrace.
No more the world feels she that she can face,
And seeking only her Leander's fate,
She leaps into the waves ere these abate.

High from the tower's top—a quivering mass—
She falls beside her lover's form; to pass
Beside his shade to realms unseen, untold,
Where never souls are sad, nor hearts grow cold!

There shall the crowns of Eros wreath their
brows,
While from their goblets only nectar flows;
And shrines to Venus stand; the Goddess lives,
High o'er th' Olympian mount, her blessing
gives.

1899.

THE LOSS OF LÆONE

ARGUMENT

THE Goddess of Fortune came to earth, in the form of a beautiful maiden named Læone. A shepherd, who stands for man in the poem, fell in love with the goddess; but just as he thought to possess himself of her love in return, she disappeared. The poem opens at the shepherd's grief for her loss. He turns to the Wizard of Rocks for counsel, and is directed to take with him his Staff of the East with its silver crown, to assist him in his search. He seeks over the world for his belovéd, accompanied by Nobæa, the companion of sorrow; but unable to find her, he returns to his native land, and there in his home, beneath the shadow of a tree, is his long sought, his Læone.

It is the intention of this allegory to show that Fortune, which all men love, is in their own hands if they look for it among the facilities which God has given unto them, rather than seek it abroad, where are often unhappiness and vain striving.

THE LOSS OF LÆONE¹

AH, me, for the loss of Læone!
My lovely Læone;
Weep, weep for the loss of Læone!
Her form has departed the northland;
Ah, when to return!

Hast thou gone to the west or the southland,
New secrets to learn?
Hast thou flown to the Mid-Winter's palace,
His mistress to be?
Ah, thine eyes would I see,
My belovéd, my beautiful maid!

Lo, the Wizard of Rocks, he hath said:
“Take thy staff with the silver upon it,
Thy staff of the east, and away
To the mountains, and there shall thy chalice
Of golden relief rise to thee.”

¹ *The Loss of Læone* was suggested to the author after reading a translation from the Greek of Bion's Lament on the Death of Adonis. The beauties of this masterpiece of Greek poetry are too well known to students of the classics to require comment here.

“O staff of the east, then I take thee,”
I cried, and away wound my song,
My song for the lovely Læone,
My wail for the wrong.
O staff with the silver upon it,
O staff, with the magic that won it,
Guide me unto the highland up-passes,
To fields where the trees shall chant masses
Above, for this heart that is torn!

Come, Nobæa; all pleasures are gone.
Come, Nobæa, my comrade of sorrow:
O Shepherd forlorn!
Seek with me, 'neath the hills of to-morrow,
For lovely Læone, Læone the wonderous maid.

Then Nobæa did gird on his blade,
And did follow my steps to the north,
To the lands of all glory and worth,
O'er the hills, the green valleys,
Where Heleon dallies,
To laugh where the river-god plays.
Ah, these hearts are turned red in the ending
Of Summer; the glorious days
Of her sunshine are wending

Their funeral ways.
Then through fields of green laurel and sumach,¹
My heart would I trail
O'er the ground, through the deep verdant vale,
Through the trees,
Where the whispering breeze
Sighs so softly, so wistful, so softly:
“Oh, where is Læone?”
“Læone — Læone,” reëchoes the vale.

Then these hearts here around me, so mournful,
Are bleeding with love — oh, so scornful
The world that returns
Death for life! Their soul burns
With desire to find thee;
To love, to possess thee,
To dwell with the beautiful maid.

Ah! How sweet is this valley² beneath me,
Where Heleon plays
With the water now sparkling with rays
Of the sunshine. Alas! No Læone I see.

¹ *The Loss of Læone* was written during a week's visit at Warren, Mass. The hills of Warren are covered with the “green laurel and sumach” alluded to in Læone.

² The valley “with the water now sparkling with rays” is a pretty bit of

Yea, then far to the southland we'll wander,
O comrade of sorrow, to yonder
Far distant deserted display
Of fair robes, of gay colors,
Of warmth with sweet odors,
To lands of perpetual day.
Oh! oh, for Læone! Why then art thou gone ?
My beautiful one,
Whom I sought 'neath the orange and lime,
'Neath the juniper tree ?
Thy sweet spirit I see,
Haunting the shades, haunting the air;
Oh, so noble and fair
When once thou art found,
And so high o'er the ground
When lost! Sadly, my sister I see
When, tired, I lay me to rest
O'er the desert, and seek there the nest
Of the ostrich whose friend I would be.

Oh! oh, for Læone!¹
My heart shall repine thee

rustic scenery overlooked by the windows of the room in which the first
MS. was written.

¹ The poem itself is purely imaginary.

Fore'er, till thy form I may see.
Lo! Nobæa, away toward the east
Have we wandered, and found not the least
Sign of her whom we sought;
Only sorrows have brought.
Far then back to our country we'll go.
To my birthland I'd cling,
Fairer songs there to sing,
And find her whom we know!
Ah! Look ye my soul o'er the hill.
O'er green laurel and sumach the rill
Runs so blithely; thy pleasures shall be
Its young life, new to thee,
Here to see.
And look ye my soul, as we wander
Again to the vale; yea to yonder
Dark trees, even fonder
Than e'er was before;
Seest thou, O my soul, there in store
Nobler treasures than man shall possess,
Nobler joys than are wreathed by success;
Seest thou not Læone,
Thy long lost Læone,
Læone, the wonderous maid?
Ah, my comrade, come hither, Nobæa;

O comrade of sorrows, to see her,
My loved one, once more.
Now are sweets still in store
For this poor bleeding heart.
Here embrace me, my comrade. I fall
O'er thy neck as we part,
Feeding now on my love that is all!

Læone, Læone, loved one, Læone,
Gladly do I greet thee; gladly do I sing.
Læone, Læone, ever dear Læone;
Newer treasures thy return shall bring!

1899.

THE COMING OF GENIUS¹

THE sands of all time have held out to our
fathers

A future of golden-hued honor and fame.*
A crown of green laurels the tribunal gathers
In early youth's image of greatness to name.
But ah! as we wind o'er the hills and the val-
leys,

Our threads of deep destiny, each in their train,
How the thoughts of our childhood fade far
from the eyesight,

And many a year passes by us in vain!
The sun in its brilliancy sinks to the twilight.
The angels of hope on their wings through the
air,
Have swept circles so wide and so high, we re-
sisted

To gaze on their passage, and turned to despair.

¹ It is a curious incident, that *The Coming of Genius* was written one morning in July, 1899, out of doors in the country near Boston, the whole MS. being written in about thirty-five minutes and hardly a word having to be changed in revising, thus showing the effect of natural surroundings upon the mind.

“Then cast to the airs with wild columbine
scented,

The child of thy bosom, thou soft son of Mars:
‘T is a boy with wild eyes, like the steed of
Apollo,

A truant to earth, yea, a friend of the stars!”

My refrain would I sing, as in sadness I wan-
der

Through vales half deserted, half peopled with
woe,

And my heart would I give in its fullness to
yonder

Poor soul whom bewildering Genius would
know.

See him first in the glories of early sensation,
Breathe in the sweet odors of Heaven, he feels
To be near and around him. He heeds not
temptation;

Nor sees that before the dark Traitor he kneels.

“Ah! thy steps are so light and thine eyes so
unhindered

By Care or Despondency yet to be found,
That thy dreams are all azured; thy fields lie
uncindered

By Passion's fierce flame, or by stones 'neath
the ground!

Still I care not to tell thee thy danger is waiting,
Half clothed in those joyous delights of the
mind;

Its own anguish thy future rewards so belating,
At times e'en thine honor would linger behind.
There before thee, I see the dark years in their
sorrow:

A train of hard labors, like Hercules' own,
Are in enmity oft with the gods of the morrow.
In vain would it seem that thine earnest is sown.

“ Still take heart, O my friend, — for my friend
I would call thee, —

Thy years are not ended, thy passage not o'er!
All the glories of life in their grandeur await thee.
Behind cast no thought, for the goal lies before!

“ Now when all is but darkness, and man has
no caring

For pain nor for sorrow, thy God is thy stay.
From the clouds, like the rainbow in Heaven
appearing,

The sunlight leaps forth to enlighten thy way!

“Then thine arms shall encircle the love that
awaits thee.

Thine eyes shall behold thine own country once
more;

And the seas shall roll by, at thy feet in the
triumph

Of Truth, that is sown on the cold ragged
shore!”

Ah, my heart! hast thou found in the world that
has spurned thee,

Some souls like thine own, that are passing the
main?

Take them close to thy bosom and treasure the
meeting,

For God leads yet others behind in their train.

Thus would Genius appear to a world that is
fleeting,

And pass to another, where nobler relays
Of her children are waiting, with powers to
honor

These toilers below through their lingering
days.



SONNETS

FIRST LOVE

OH, thou art sent from Heaven, thou form divine,

Enclosing 'neath thy breast a human soul,
Beating in tune with dreams, that mellowed wine

Would raise within mankind for some high goal!

Do thou then come to me in this short hour,
When years of longed-for bliss have sorrowed by;

To droop thine eye, with its strange half-grown power,

To whisper nothings faint yet sweetly shy ?

Ah! Thou are there indeed! My heart would beat,

To ask the question first, then to display

In each light wave of feeling — to repeat

Those words that framed their joy at peep of day.

Come, Love, entwine with kisses my warm
brow,

And in Love's halo consummate thy vow!

1898.

LOST LOVE

WHEN the gray clouds with blood-red fire are
stained,

In Autumn's evening; when the cold air blows
Across the heart, and life seems filled with foes;
Then doth this love-lorn soul, with anguish
pained,

Seek its dark cave, and find the hours have
waned.

Yet would the floods of memory-laden woes
Fade in resplendent beams of warm repose,
When Love though lost, returning, is regained!

Oh, thy sweet lips that once I pressed; divine
In rapturous harmony, in heavenly bliss!

The eyes full soft with sweetness I would kiss,
And hold once more thine image — to repine
Sadly beyond, when joys their place resign
To cold despair. Surely some dream is this!

1899.

SONNET

WRITTEN ON REACHING THE AGE OF
TWENTY-FOUR

HOURS and years, have ye thus passéd by,
In seeming innocence my soul to find,
In some new rhapsody my heart to bind,
As life doth loose its four and twentieth tie ?
Not thus the vernal joy of youth had I
Pictured upon the wings of dawn, that wind
Mysterious circles far above mankind,
And rise to Heaven as from the earth they fly.

Not thus the hard, the parsimonious world
Had I first thought a foe to peace or love!
Not then had those pure dreams of truth been
torn,

In ruthless care, asunder — vainly hurled
From their high throne, in kingless state to rove:
And thus my dying youth I fain would mourn!

1899.

SONNET

WRITTEN ON REACHING THE AGE OF TWENTY-FIVE

AH! Have I come to earth, from heaven above,
To breathe its air for threescore years and ten,
And mingle with this crowd of conquering men,
Who turn toward an exchange of gold for love?
Where is that purer sphere, where once I strove,
To linger only in its glade and fen;
Nor knew that it possessed the darksome glen,
That we have called this world in which we
move?

My heart, another year has joined the rest
That thou hast known for joy or sorrow, yet
To be prolonged three-fold, e'er thou may'st go
On high once more, and feed the thirsting
breast

On love immortal that shall not forget;
That shall not die; that sorrow ne'er shall
know.

1900.

POEMS ON ENGLISH SUBJECTS

CORONATION ANTHEM

TO THEIR MAJESTIES KING EDWARD VII
AND QUEEN ALEXANDRA

I

Lo! The sun shines o'er the land.
Praise and peace go hand in hand.
Take Columbia's joyous greeting,
Given as Her heart is beating.

Crown the King,
Great Edward, King.
Crown Him. To an Emperor sing.

II

Wave on high the sword of peace,
Now proclaimed; let warfare cease,
Through this Empire's wide dominion,
Causing Love its wings to pinion.

Crown Thee King,
Great Britain's King.
Crown Him. To an Emperor sing.

III

Hail! His Royal consort rides,
Fairer than a thousand brides,
With Him through the world's procession,
Still an Empire's proud possession.

Crown the Queen.

No lovelier Queen
Alexandra's land hath seen.

IV

Then let loyal songs arise,
Floating to the azured skies,
Take this Coronation blessing,
Sovereigns, unto God addressing:

Crown the King,

Great Edward, King.

Crown Him. To an Emperor sing.

1902.

THE BRITONS

A REPLY TO MR. RUDYARD KIPLING'S POEM,
"THE ISLANDERS" ¹

At a time when the poet's finger,
Traces over the sands of time
An indictment to rest and linger,
As it were on his nation's crime;
There is food for our recollection
Of the things that might have been,
There is chance that his deep reflection
Might have killed what he counts as sin.
In our hearts we all seek — and justly —
The iron our country needs.
Is there not in each bosom, firstly,
The growth of those early seeds,

¹ This poem, which was written during the afternoon on which *The Islanders* appeared in the London *Times*, was first published in the *Anglo-American* in London on January 18, 1902, appearing subsequently in Paris and Berlin. The criticisms of Kipling on the English sports of cricket and rowing were the occasion of a considerable outcry on the part of the votaries of athletic training as a means of forming the national character in England.

That were sown in life's childhood hour;
That were grown in the later years;
That were born for a nation's power,
And brought forth at her prayers and tears ?
Lies there not then, beneath all nations,
The instinct of kith and kin,
The thought that — whatever their stations —
Forbids that their country sin ?
Are there not, at their plows in the furrow,
Full many an arm to bend ?
Are there not, from the palace in sorrow,
Lords or princes who gladly send
Sons or brothers, a mother her firstborn,
A wife her true husband again,
A maiden her love — parched and thirstworn —
Awaiting some tiding of pain ?
Are there not through all lands of the Briton,
Waiting yet their new strength to display,
Countless hundreds to follow, like Triton,
The mistress of seas and the spray ?
Though a stranger, from far o'er the ocean,
I tell you 't is well to applaud
England's imperial potion;
And though justly to blame yet to laud.

There are those who in critical measure
Would cry 'gainst the things that are done;
There are those, again, who would treasure
The battles fought and won.
And "the flanneled fools at the wicket,"
"The muddied oafs at the goals;"
Better the life of the thicket,
The freedom of their souls.
Better the sports and the pastimes,
That make men for the nation's field;
Better mayhap than those last rhymes
We wrote or the pen we wield.
There are those whom we choose to govern,
And those who are born to lead;
There are men in the simple tavern
Who know nothing but their need.
And not one but shall seek protection
From God who is over all;
For in man there is no perfection.
He arises but to fall.
And the threescore years of his power,
Or his threescore years of defeat,
Lead alike from his gilded tower
To the grave that is at his feet.

And when England stands at the judgment,
Before the throne on high,
Where pounds mean less than parchment,
And where the lowly lie;
Who shall say that her rulers trembled
At promises of war ?
Who shall say that their words dissembled
The battles or the gore ?
Who shall say that the Briton carried
His misery to the Boer;
Or chased from home, or tarried
Behind the open door ?
Who shall say that she fought unfeeling,
Unhonored and alone
Of nations, or unheeding
The sorrow or the groan ?
Who shall say her sacred mission
Remained half unfulfilled;
That conquest was her passion,
Or that blood was idly spilled ?
Let us pause in one grand emotion
At the work that she has done;
For the Britons o'er the ocean
Have more than proudly won.

They have carried truth and daylight,
From south to east or west;
They have tempered many a twilight,
And God their work has blest.

1902.

THE SPECTRE LORD

A SONG OF AN ENGLISH HOUSE

I

THE Lord sat in his castle hall.
A hound was at his knee.
The antlers rose above his head,
For a noble lord was he.

II

Long since, the hidden guests had left
The scenes of revelry;
And never a sound came back again,
Through vault or gallery.

III

The Lord sat on; his head was bent,
His brow was overcast.
For his son and heir had come of age
And his secret knew at last.

IV

Long years had passed; his Lady dead;
And the Lord a son had bred.
His face was fair, this son and heir.

His brow was high,
And blue his eye;
For he knew no curse was lurking by,
Nor agony to dread.

V

O Christ, have mercy on this son
Of a house and gallant race,
When the Spectre Lord returns again,
And shows his ghastly face!

VI

O Christ, have mercy on thy son,
For he is young and fair;
Nor time nor travail bend his frame,
Nor turn his auburn hair!

VII

Then through the long, long gallery,
Unto his father's hall,
The youthful Lord, with joyous tread
His father's name did call.

VIII

Once, twice, then thrice he shouted loud;
Some evil there must be!
(For never a word came back again,
Through vault of gallery.)

IX

At last unto his father's chair,
He came, the son and heir.
O God, the sight! His face is white!
Upon his breast
His head doth rest.
Two stains of blood lie there!

X

The Lord, the father, he is dead,
And his son before him stands.
But what is this that lays its head
Against the stiffened hands ?

XI

Ah! What was once a cherished hound,
More faithful than a friend,
Has licked his master's poisoned wound,
And joined his fatal end.

xii

Mercy have then upon this son,
Who sees before him here
So terrible a sight as this,
And stands in speechless fear!

xiii

Mercy, O God, to those in youth
Who know nor care nor sin;
Who live in blessed innocence
Of evil that has been.

xiv

The young lord knelt before the dead,
And many a bitter tear he shed.
His heart was rent, his sorrow spent.
His father's love
In vain he strove
To call from whence it fled.

xv

Oh, but to know a father's love,
And feel his kindly glance!
Not I, not all the world would have
More that in life enhance

XVI

The joyous hours of youth, their light
With manly thoughts to fill,
Nor many a passing fitful flight,
Its kindly warmth to kill.

XVII

O God, then on this youth look down!
A Marquis now is he.
Sadly his eye looks on the scene
That once was revelry.

XVIII

Yet while he kneels in speechless awe
Before his father's frame,
An ice-cold hand lies on his head;
And *Something* calls his name.

XIX

He turns: "Who dares to break my grief?
And what hast thou to say? Be brief."
In vain he tries to turn his eyes.
O God, the vale!
His face is pale.
There stands the Spectre Lord!

XX

“Come forth with me, thou paltry being.
Come and behold thy fate.”

Thus spake the ghastly Phantom Lord,
And op’d the castle gate.

XXI

And there he stood, his steel gray eye,
His knotted beard undone,
And long damp locks that fell around
A face that mortals shun.

XXII

Yet from his person there escaped
What every man must dread
(An hundred years lay at his feet,
An hundred on his head):

XXIII

The smell of opened graves laid bare
And suddenly revealed,
The sense of something in the air,
That lay for long concealed.

XXIV

Ah! But a flash was in his eye.
And from his hollow voice a cry
There came like death; and with his breath,
A flame of fire
Bespoke his ire.
Such was the Spectre Lord!

XXV

He led the noble youth beyond
The towers of his home,
And pointed with his withered hand
To pinnacle and dome.

XXVI

“Then seest thou those ancient walls,
Their guarded battlements,
That held the prowess of thy name
Through Time’s entanglements.

XXVII

“Behold them crumble into dust,
When I but wave my sword!
For I that once their master was,
Am now their Spectre Lord.

XXVIII

“Yet see them flourish, once again;
For I may rule them still.
The crime that stole them from my hand
Shall each possessor kill.

XXIX

“Then, lest they fall to rise no more,
Come forth; come forth, to see the store
Of sorrow’s hell, within this dell.
Give me thy soul,
And hear this toll
Of dirges and of war.”

XXX

The Marquis to the dell repaired.
No choice had he but follow
(The Spectre held him in his grasp)
Unto the haunted hollow.

XXXI

There to his half bewildered gaze,
A sight unearthly shown
Unto each eldest son appeared,
When once to manhood grown.

XXXII

A sight, unearthly in its scene,
Uncanny to the living,
Given by Death unto a soul
Ungrateful for the giving.

XXXIII

And as they stood, the Spectre Lord
Turned to the moonlit ground,
And opened with his naked sword
A deep and dismal wound.

XXXIV

Ah! That this wound might close again!
And end the long and fatal chain
Of tragedy, that turns the key,
That pierces deep,
And holds the keep
Of many a castle main!

XXXV

Then from the ground came forth the dead,
Their corpses half revealed,
And to the clemency of God
In agony appealed.

XXXVI

Their cries now rent the cold night air,
 Now chilled the living soul;
Now sank into the worm-worn earth,
 As back again they stole.

XXXVII

And as this purgatorial horde
 Increased, or disappeared,
They gathered near their Spectral Lord,
 Whose coming they revered.

XXXVIII

And many a noble scion was there,
 Who ruled in days of yore
The towers that rose above the air,
 And fell beneath his gore.

XXXIX

And many a noble chief was seen
Upon the ground, where he had been
Murdered before his castle door.

 Ah! What a sight!
 Again they fight,
Again besmear the green!

XL

Then, while the hungry vultures tore
The corpse's flesh in twain,
The young Lord saw a century's crime,
The murderer live again.

XLI

A host of sin-stained spirits passed,
In terrible array,
Gathered from every passion's blast,
And destined there to stay.

XLII

“Horrible, horrible,” sighed the Lord.
“Must I behold this scene?”
(The Spectre held him in his grasp)
“And what my race has been!”

XLIII

And then there came a shocking sight,
A murdered maiden fair,
Slain in her desecrated youth,
All strewn with golden hair,

XLIV

Stretched on the floor in pools of blood,
Basely defiled, so pure and good!
His veins ran cold; the young Lord bold
Saw in her form
His own love warm,
Repeated where he stood!

XLV

Then, maddened with inflamed desire
To save his youthful love,
He cast the Spectre's arm aside,
And held his sword above;

XLVI

And called the maiden by her name,
And wept upon her breast,
And sought to claim her from the past —
A prayer to God address't.

XLVII

Yet, as he dragged her from the place
Where murdered she had lain
A century in the tomb, revealed,
The Spectre Lord was slain!

XLVIII

And with one long unearthly cry,
That rent the very ground,
He raised on high his ghastly face,
And showed a hideous wound;

XLIX

While from his breast poured forth a stream
Of living flame, as in a dream.
His blood was fire. He did expire,
E'en as the Son
His Love had won,
Within the moon's faint beam.

L

Thus by th' impetuous love of youth,
The Marquis had atoned
A crime that gave his noble race
The curse that they bemoaned.

LI

And by his daring to uplift
The maiden from her tomb,
The Law that gave the Spectre life
Engulfed him in its womb.

LII

He sank, all flowing forth with fire,
Sank through the earth below,
Sank in his own revengeful ire,
Where evil spirits go.

LIII

And with his parting curse a cry
Of vanquished agony
He gave, that touched the young Lord's breast,
And sank in irony:

LIV

“Why hast thou, in a single hour,
Untied the girdle of my power?
Ah! But thy race usurped my place!
And took my name,
And killed my fame,
And stole my castle tower!”

LV

But still the young Lord clasped the maid,
And watched the Spectre die.
Held in his long embrace of love,
She gave no sound nor cry.

LVI

Then from the shades around the dell
 Rose angels on the air,
Spirits that blessed their happy fate,
 And held them in their care.

LVII

Soft in the moonlight shone their wings,
 Lit up with heavenly fire,
Aglow with something that on high
 Their union did inspire.

LVIII

And as they moved, the heavenly beings
 Wound in a peaceful train
The heights that held the castle tower,
 And filled its hall again.

LIX

And thus true love o'ercame the power,
That for a century its dower
Had left in blood, upon the flood
 Of life that passed,
 And shadows cast.
Let now its blessings shower!

1902.

ODES

AFTER THE STYLE OF ANACREON

These little odes, copied from the style employed by Anacreon, the Greek poet, are not in any sense translations or adaptations; but a series of short poems. They were written on twelve successive evenings, in the spring of 1900, at The Wayside Inn. The original MSS., which were each completed within a certain prescribed time, have not been altered in any respect.



ODE I

TO ZEUS

ZEUS, O God and King of all,
Olympic songs shall mark thy fall.
Ambrosial nourishment thy soul
Shall have, and nectar from the bowl!
When Eros strikes thee with his dart,
Then, then th' Olympic host shall start
In wondering terror at the wound,
And gather near thee on the ground.
“For mighty Zeus has from his state
On high descended to the fate
Of all mankind, that mortal be,
And ne'er immortal joy shall see,”

They sing, and singing hail the God
Begotten from thy very blood.
Apollo springs to life from love,
And joins the court of Gods above;
Henceforth to know what love may be,
For well-nigh God of Love were he!

1900.

ODE II

TO APOLLO

APOLLO, comest thou to earth ?
The heavens surely have no dearth
Of beauty in their golden courts,
Where Cupid in his youth disports ?
Ah, comest thou to meet the muse,
And in her virgin breast infuse
New fire, that some day shall procure
The Orphic strain in love secure ?
My heart, my heart, hast thou a chord,
That shall withstand the mighty sword
Of Mars, when, half at war with love,
He sinks — as docile as the dove —
To earth and worships at the shrine,
That flows with magic blood or wine.
Come, God of archery, thy son
Like thee the soul of man hath won.
Since music thou didst give to man,
Bless'd be the folly of thy ban !

1900.

ODE III

TO CUPID

CUPID, thou the wingéd boy,
Who with human hearts would toy,
Give me, give me back my soul
That thou didst send to Pluto's goal!
Once in Venus' garden fair,
Fanned by flowery, perfumed air,
Once a lovely rose I found,
Lying softly on the ground.
I picked it up, and toward my lip
I raised it high, its joy to sip.
But as I raised the flower, a thorn
Turned sudden joy to grief forlorn.
Ah, Cupid, Cupid, save my heart,
And extricate this fatal dart!
My day is turned to sadder night
Than e'er did maiden put to flight.
Thy sweetest hours fade in air,
And leave behind them naught but cold despair!

1900.

ODE IV

TO CUPID

THY sweetest hours fade, I say,
And leave behind no light of day.
They fade, or (happy, happy fate!)
They yet remain, and fade too late.
With musk-rose sweet or eglantine,
They mingle there, with bubbling wine.
They bring us greater joy than e'er
I fain had thought existed here
On earth, or e'en in heaven above,
Where Gods do live in heav'nly love.
O Cupid, then thy joys I bless!
Thy wingéd form I 'd fain caress,
And worship thee in every lay
That muses bring, or magic fay.
For surely thou to earth didst come
To chase all evil from its home,
And wind a blushing garland 'round
Each maiden's form, from off the ground!

1900.

ODE V

TO VENUS

TAKE, Venus, homage pure from me,
It comes from sweetest Arcady,
And rises to Olympus' bower,
Where love shall newer pleasure shower,
Its essence, born of love divine,
Is free from fumes of flowing wine.
Its loveliness to man bestowed,
Is sweeter than the branches bowed
With honey-scented flowers of spring,
That to this bosom gently cling.
O inspiration from on high,
Thou goddess, for thy love I sigh,
And pant with rapture at the view,
That I would here obtain anew.
O Lily, sweeter than the air,
So pure that thou dost seem to share
The ether of that heavenly sphere,
Around thy shrine we gather near.
Within the vales or glades abound

Thy temples, echoing the sound
Of love, to beauty wedded there.
These sounds to nectar turn the air.
Oh, thou art sweeter than the dream
Of higher pleasure, that would seem
To consummate the soul's desire,
And fill man's heart with mystic fire!
Thy son, born from diviner thought,
To earth a bow and arrow brought,
To pierce the softest spot that lies
Beneath the roughest form, that tries
To brave the crest of passion's wave,
And yet his soul from passion save.
But leading by the hand the boy,
Whom mischiefs in his art employ,
Thou freest him within the soul,
And man is drowned within this bowl
Of liquid love and beauty pure;
That passion from his heart is sure,
To there conceive, — and find 't is sweet —
While pain he tramples 'neath his happy feet.

1900.

ODE VI

TO BACCHUS

BACCHUS, prince of mirth and wine,
Grapes around thine head entwine.
Here feast and dance upon the green,
That from those dreary mortals screen
Thy joyous follies evermore,
For thy true votaries in stone.
Away with mournful, sombre ways!
To revelry I 'd sing my lays,
Prancing with satyrs on the heath,
And viewing nymphs that sport beneath
The groves, that run with crimson streams,
Flowing from goblets' golden brims.
Oh! Toss to nothing duty's call!
'T is pleasure that is all in all!
No money-changing Plutus drear,
Our revelries shall change to fear.
O Bacchanalians! Hold thy God,
Lest he do fall upon the sod,
And end this merry scene too soon —
The rights of Bacchus — and their boon!

1900.

ODE VII

TO HERMES

Son of Jove, thy wingéd feet
The airs of heav'n soft would beat,
And carry from thy father's hall
The serpent-twinéd rod withal.
Say, Hermes, where didst thou acquire
Thy caduceus for the lyre;
To hold aloft thy wingéd cap,
And point to heaven, from the lap
Of mother earth thy finger-tip ?
Couldst scarce restrain the maiden's lip,
That loving thee, would thee embrace
(Her arms with thine to interlace) ?

When yet a babe — four hours old —
A tortoise-shell thine hand did hold,
Beside the rushing water's brink,
Where birds with Gods together drink.
Nine holes around its edges made
(To suit the Muses it is said);
Nine cords of finest linen then

Were drawn. Complete, the lyre again
From heav'n to earth did thereby come,
And find with man a welcome home.

But Hermes to Apollo gave
Th' enchanted instrument, to wave
Above his wings the serpent's rod,
Henceforth to serve the fleeter God.

In summer's soft and dulcet airs,
Enthroned in flowery, grottoed lairs,
The lyre touched by hands divine,
Soft strains of music there enshrine;
While Hermes, wrestling with those wiles
Of all mankind, his time beguiles;
Oft thieving, with a God's own skill,
He manages the truth to kill.

Yet beauty ever on his brow
Would cause his votaries to bow,
And offer potions to his shrine
Of honeyed fruit and golden wine.
Fly, God on high! Return again,
And swiftly reach in air the souls of men!

ODE VIII

TO MINERVA

THOU art a Goddess cold and true.
Wisdom — known but to the few —
Cometh from thy fane alway,
And causeth night to turn to day.
Pallas was thy name in Greece,
While Jason sought the golden fleece.
Athene likewise art thou called;
But now Minerva hath forestalled
Those other names, that men would give
To thee while Wisdom yet shall live.

Cold and loveless, thou art yet
On high, like some bright jewel set,
To light the world, to lead mankind
Unto the goal that he would find.
Sprung from the very head of Zeus,
No mind hast thou to bear abuse;
But seest all things as they are,
And happiness, e'en from afar.

The owl upon thy temple placed
All folly from thy shrine hath chased,

And brought those peaceful, passive ways
That follow youth's distracting days.

Wild folly's vain and ceaseless strife
Shall find no place within thy life.

Impet'ous longing, mad desire
Must other deities inspire.

Anger hath no place with thee:
Peaceful love shall ever be
Companion to thy learnéd ways,
And him, that to thy mercy prays.

Mark then, Minerva, well thy sons,
Whom Wisdom seeks and Folly shuns,
Whom honest longing for the truth
Shall bring to higher courts, forsooth!
No goblets, filled with foaming wine,
Pour they upon thy sacred shrine,
No banquets, near thy temples held,
Disturb the visions there beheld.

No mimic laughter of the fool,
No turning of another's tool,
No false attainment bear thy swains,
No scoffing jest the heart entrains!
But thus pursued, their end they reach,
Joyous that they their fellow men may teach

1900.

ODE IX

TO CERES

VERDANT field, or pasture green,
Ever to thy care has been
Like some temple to the God,
Who holds on high the twinéd rod
And seeks Ambrosia for his food.

I place a seed within the earth,
In springtime; thou dost give it birth,
To bear in air some golden flower,
And add to life its tiny power.
The soil's abundance thou dost guide,
To be the Autumn's mellow bride,
And fill with plenty all our days.
Behold! I sing my joyful lays,
Propitious Goddess, that the crows
May scatter from these youthful rows
Of corn and growing crops, that yield
Their welcome harvest from the field.
'T is thou dost crown the year with wealth,

And give to Autumn half his health.
Then hold my tired limbs, and bear
This cup of life that I would share!

1900.

ODE X

TO PAN

I STRODE one day to where the flocks
Of snow-white sheep, among the rocks
And flow'ry pastures wander.
Yet while there I fain did ponder,
'Mid a host of shepherds rude,
Playing upon pipes of wood.
Pan I spied, the mighty Pan.

Toward the joyous crowd I ran,
Breathing in the lighter air
Of rural life and Nature fair!
There in lovely Arcady,
Sorrows from the heart would fly.
Dancing o'er the purple turf,
Of love at least we have enough;
Of joy we drink the sweetest draught
That ever God or Goddess quaff'd.

Thus would I sweet Pan have been,
Had I not some flower seen,
That seemed so beautiful to have,

I sought it on this earth; but love,
Now that on earth my soul is placed,
Seems from its life to have been chased.
Ah! Take me then again to thee,
Thou God of joyous Arcady!
There, envious passion ne'er shall dwell,
Nor love the lover's sorrow tell;
Nor e'en a nymph that bathes therein
Know half the wickedness of sin.
Then in the air of love divine
(Oh, better far than cooling wine!)
My soul would dwell in happy peace,
The gladness of its own release!
Far better, far than worldly joys,
Are those that Nature thus employs.
Then rise, my being, from the earth.
Leave there its miserable hearth.
Arcadian simplicity;
Enough, it is enough for me!

1900.

ODE XI

TO MIRTH

STRAINS of laughter greet the ear.
What is there indeed to fear
Of sadness, or of lone despair,
While Mirth and Gladness fill the air ?
Dancing to a pleasing grove,
Lovely maidens sing of love.
Pleasantries and gay delight
Fill the flowery night.

Yonder faun his frolic plays,
While I sing these happy lays,
Happy, happy, happy lays!
I 'd sing them all my days.
When in a darkened mood desponding,
We would seek the shade of death,
Find we ever mirth responding
To the living breath.
Then pray cast away thy sighs,
O'er the wave of youth to rise,
O'er the summit of the skies
I 'd find thee, welcome Mirth!

1900.

ODE XII

TO LOVE

IN some mossy glen reclining,
Soft with dewy columbine,
I would woo thee, Love, divining
Whether thou wouldest there be mine.

See the youth, in glowing ardor,
Fondle thus the maiden's hand.
Pressing near this weeping arbor,
Rapture, waiting thus, would stand.

Happy transport of the soul;
Happier than the flowing bowl!
Love within an instant fleeting,
Pours its blessing from the heart;
Thus its pleasant "*beating, beating,*"
Never shall from life depart.

Oh! come take these treasures all,
Gladly from mine hand they fall!
Give me in return thine eyes,
Fairer far than sunny skies,
And in sweetest frenzy sip
This honeyed nectar from thy lip.

QUATRAINS



FIRST SERIES

I

THE goldenrod has bloomed, has died and gone.
Its second bloom has seen the summer's morn.
"Thy stem is bent; but thou shalt rise again.
Thy soul to Heav'n incarnate shall be born."

II

A light I see that shineth o'er the cloud.
(The mountain-top is veiled within its shroud.)
Show thus thy soul, my Friend, or pass away,
And leave this light. For I would cry aloud.

III

One breath of passion o'er the orchard flung,
Would turn this gentle song my heart hath sung,
To something deeper than the lake below,
And drown those tears, that from the heart are
wrung.

IV

And I have turned to lighted hall, and seen
But darkness, where a fairer light had been
If love had step't into the candle's flame,
And turned its fire into a nobler sheen.

V

My youth and I have played at fast and loose.
I killed the duckling and the fatted goose,
To feast upon them with delighted eyes;
But ere the feast the meat had lost its juice.

VI

A noisy song, by wine or laughter fed:
An idle thought of some unloving bed:
Why come these flames upon the field of youth,
Their tainted light o'er truer Friendship shed ?

VII

For what have wine or vapors, to allure;
Or what would Pleasure to its own assure ?
Oh, were not Heav'n concealed within the Cup,
Thy soul this yoke of earth could not endure.

VIII

The falling fruit of senses in their prime,
An evil omen o'er my bowl of wine:
Give me my youth, O Dream, or pass away,
Leaving the Night to live but to the Day.

IX

Come linger in the bath, and thou shalt see
My friends and I no longer of the Earth.
But by the water and the air to be,
Though not of Heav'n all that a Friend were
worth.

X

My fellows, ye who live to fill your purse,
Gaze here upon this chain of gold, and curse
The hour ye squandered, in your greed for more
Than life could bring — oh, Better then were
Worse!

XI

Leave then thine arid love of self to die,
Where'er the drought shall cast upon the soil

L. OF C.

Its hardened aspect: I had rather lie
O'er beds of truer pleasure, free from toil!

XII

'T were better, then, to give myself to life,
To lose my treasures, and to find my soul,
Than that this Flesh should dwell — an idle
strife —

In seeking for deep waters near the shoal;

XIII

And by the giving of myself to find
A door close there, upon my life behind,
And pass at last beyond the prison gate,
Where chains of grief my heart no longer bind.

XIV

When I first knew Thee, Thou wert old and gray,
Though Thou wert young, and I have heard
Thee say:

They laughed upon Thee, Magic One, and why?
For now they bow before Thee on the way.

XV

A gentle hand upon my shoulder brought
A tear into the heart — a sudden thought
That Life was worth the living, worth the end,
Where I believed no gentleness was wrought.

XVI

For why these faintings of the seeking heart;
Or why should I but give to Thee the part?
If not the whole, then nought of Thee for me.
Thine end shall be no better than the start!

XVII

These lips are Thine, to feed the limpid eye.
These eyes are mine, the anguish of my soul
To tell in silence: though the heart shall sigh;
That very sigh may lead me to my goal.

XVIII

To change my coat, to wear a pleasant smile,
And in the haunts of Fashion to beguile
A Day that turneth Dusk into the night,
Were Night indeed without one spirit's wile.

XIX

Some faces lighted round this magic lamp,
With gentler fire, bear the truer stamp
That wakes the flow of wine to something more,
And warms the spirit if the night be damp.

XX

Then love me well, my neighbor from the hill,
So that I love thee, heart and soul, until
The leaf of autumn falls, to die away;
Then love thine house, and love thy servant still.

XXI

A passing face, an idle glance or two,
A chance regret beside the fallen yew,
A thought of something that has never been:
Ah, leave the many for the chosen few!

XXII

A pleasing dream: they say it is not well,
E'en for Reality, to Fancy sell.
For as I dream my days in airy thought,
My friend, near by, hears not this curfew bell.

XXIII

In moral isolation from mankind,
A hermit Soul nor Body, there, would find
To be the Truth of life; nor there could live
In holy, healthy happiness of mind.

XXIV

Yet Body to the Soul would often say:
“Thine eye from off my form may turn away;
Yet leave to me the beauty of the whole,
That maketh Love the Laws of Life obey.”

XXV

Some things, for half our lifetime laid away,
When we have seen another child at play,
Do often fall, before the Soul revealed,
And turn its darkness into sudden day.

XXVI

I sat and spake once, in the honeyed air
Of blushing roses, with some lady fair,
Who asked if God began, or if the end
Of Life, or of the Universe were there.

XXVII

Then turned I to the trees upon the lawn,
And pointed to the pregnant ears of corn:
“For if these grew, or as they grow to-day,
So to thy soul shall God reveal its morn.”

XXVIII

Oh, be thou then thyself, and to thy Soul,
See that thou art as seeker to his goal;
Nor turn away the tiny leaves of life;
For from these leaves great secrets shall unroll.

XXIX

Am I alone, my soul and I in one,
Or are these signs of Heaven the setting sun,
With beams of life, that fade, to fall in air,
Leaving the thirsted heart, we know not where?

XXX

A shaded tree, a locust in the field,
A rosy bed, the air that flowers yield,
A quiet hour with the soul, and then —
Ah! Then the world — give me my sword and
shield!

XXXI

A waving flower by the willow tree,
A garden, planted on some pleasant lea:
Ah! what are these if I am not, with Thee,
One half on Earth, one half in Heav'n to be?

XXXII

A sultry day, that with its heated breath,
Would fan the storm to gather, lightly saith:
“I kill the aster, as the flower shall bloom.”
Oh, stay thine anger in the face of Death!

XXXIII

For what is Life, if I but chance to be;
If Thou art not to me, and I to Thee,
As rain from Heaven upon the Earth, and each
The flowering essence of our spirits see?

1898.

SECOND SERIES

I

LIFE, thou 'rt a problem solved but by a few.
Success to me were not success to you,
Nor that which makes it oft would seem to
 be
More than the hours we serve. Oh, serve them
 too!

II

Ten years, ah, ten hard years of nothing won,
Of toil unseen, and tenanted by none
Of those who feed success with Life's own flood:
These are the price, ere the long race be run.

III

Yet who shall tell me by what path to find
The palace gate, the forest, as I wind,
Uncertain here, unknowing often where
The serpent's fang my heart in prison would
 bind.

IV

And yet Success, when conquered is the game,
Were little more or little less than tame,
If Heaven's intuitions of the heart
We follow not. Ah me! An empty fame!

V

Give me the simplest cot beside the wall,
The smallest jug of ale among you all.
I'd choose thee willingly, O humbler Peace,
Than sacrifice my soul's far greater call!

VI

They led me to their palace strong and high,
And told me from its summit I might fly.
"But to us give thy soul," they darkly cried.
I fled; nor could I tell them truly why.

VII

Strange, that our friends would bury us beneath
Their own distorted mound upon the heath.
"Thou sink'st to dust," they say, "without our
aid."
And yet they know not of us one drawn breath.

VIII

Perchance, the half closed eye shall see for me.
A single thought within my heart may be
The jewel of the crown so dearly sought.
Ah! Then come triumph and delight — and
Thee.

IX

Without provision for the faults of Good,
That men present alway for daily food,
Without our own disclaimer: “yea,” or “nay,”
Divine the Truth of life we never should.

X

Then blow these bubbles through the autumn
sun,
Seeing their colors fading, one by one;
They rise, to fall, and vanish through the air,
Leaving behind them nothing lost or won;

XI

And hear the purple to the azure say:
“We come from nought, to nought return, and
lay

Our colors o'er the mists around the sphere,
To live to-morrow as we live to-day.”

XII

But if these words begin and end in nought;
If man may give to man but treasures bought;
How, through the maze and turmoil, shall he
live,
Save if the palace of his Soul be sought?

XIII

And if I seek this palace in myself,
Am I an higher Being or an elf:
A spirit, half divine and half debased:
A Something to its God, or to itself?

XIV

Come wake then from the dark, that I may see
If more than part of each is the Decree
That comes from Heav'n, and I on Earth am
made
One half my Soul, one half myself to be.

xv

My Soul: the greatness of my heart's desire,
My prayer, that through the ages shall transpire;
Myself: the poison of the earth below,
That kills its own extinguishable fire.

xvi

Since then of light and darkness we be made,
Oh, seek the sunlight, to eschew the shade,
And when the Beauties of thy Soul are freed,
Thy Master's calling thou shalt have obeyed.

xvii

They say the poppy conjures sleep divine.
I would that I then dared this heart of mine
To waft asleep, with odors breathing death,
And lose my pain in something more than wine.

xviii

But what, when I have ceased to breathe, shall be
The outcome of this problem here for me —
What? — should I find beyond the same dark
way,

Leading to paths or chasms of the sea?

XIX

What say'st thou then? Abide and rest awhile.
With lightness of thine heart the time beguile,
And soft at evening, when these shadows fade,
A pleasure comes, no longer to revile.

XX

But yet,—ah, yet,—the Night shall come
apace.

The passing breath shall end thy solemn race:
No Goal beyond for Thee who sought no love;
No Hell for Thee whose heart true love did
grace!

1899-1900.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

WRITTEN IN 1897-1898



EPITHALAMIUM

A WEDDING CHIME

I

DING, dong! A bridal morn shines forth.
Ding, dong!
For all there is of living worth,
My song
Sings to the winds of Heaven a tune,
From sun and sky, to stars and moon.

II

Belong to any race of man.
Be strong.
Be of a weak and shortened span,
Or long;
There cometh to each life an hour,
To fill it with a nobler power.

III

Ding, dong! Upon the tower high,
Along

With shades and where the shadows lie,
 My song

Rings out from many an iron tongue,
That through deep centuries have rung.

IV

Ding, dong! Ding, dong! They grow apace.

 A throng

Below hath many a noble face;

 For long

The high possessor of a name,

That nobleness hath brought to fame.

V

Ding, dong! Ding, dong! Why should we wait
 So long?

An altar stands beyond the gate.

 'T is strong

With flowers and Heaven-besprinkled dew,

That bloom but for a chosen few.

VI

Ding, dong! My heart is beating fast:

 A song

Sounds through the aisle, an organ blast,
Ding, dong,
Is echoed in a soul that prays
For happiness, in sacred ways.

VII

Ding, dong! Away with weeping now!
Belong
No sorrows to the bridal vow.
A wrong
Is righted in a moment's time,
Fanned by one breath of air sublime.

VIII

Ding, dong! Oh, mighty bell, peal on.
Our song,
Drowned in thy voice, is pale and wan;
Ding, dong;
Rolling the waves of sound, to toy
With oceans of unbounded joy.

IX

Ding, dong! Ding, dong! Lo, Hymen comes!
For long,

A wingéd boy — a garland runs —
Ding, dong —
Around the graver Cupid's wand.
A bridal torch burns in his hand.

X

Ding, dong! Apollo's son flies high,
And long.
He bears a ring beyond the sky,
With song.

Descend sweet blessings on the bride.
All happiness our friends betide!

XI

Ding, dong! Pour forth the noble crowd;
The throng.
Elated wishes rise aloud,
And long.
Lingering, as with a happy heart,
Thus we behold the bride depart.

XII

Ding, dong! My life hath died away.
Ding, dong —

The distant bell sinks with the day.

Ding, dong —

Suns still unseen have yet to rise,

Burning these mists from off the heavy eyes.

TO A FOUNTAIN¹

I

SOFT drops of rain, that fall
Half musically, some
Within a veil-like wall,
That through the mists become
Each some pearl gem whose lights have strayed
from home:

II

Their song falls through the day,
Born laughingly beneath
The wave, whose graceful way
Turns from its native heath;
In vain desire to find some parting wreath.

III

Oh, speak thy whispering joy,
Thou plaything of the air,

¹ The fountain is one of the smaller ones, situated at one of the principal entrances of the Public Garden of Boston, in the centre of which is the statue of a goddess in white marble. In summer the spray of the fountain falls over the statue, amid a miniature pond filled with water plants and azure colored water lilies.

To me! What pains alloy!
What wounds would ye repair?
Scarce may we tell within this watery lair.

IV

What sayest thou so low?
Thy pattering footsteps fall,
Each in their liquid flow,
To form some fairied hall,
Studded with diamonds of dew withal.

V

Thou hast no sin nor woe,
No duties to perform.
Those cares that mortals know
Fall from thee without harm.
Thou dost pour forth thine heart upon the
storm.

VI

Lo! Thou canst say of Love:
“I know not of thy pain.
Thy lowering shades above
O’ershadow not my plain.
I do but drop within this marble fane.”

VII

Life, still thou fallest o'er,
In those unfeeling grains
Of palest thought, to soar
Through our ozone. The strains
Of thy cold music from the heart refrains.

VIII

Oh, thou tiny fountain,
Flowing through the air;
Like some silvery mountain;
Like some mermaid's hair,
Whose tresses fall in joy and without care;

IX

Like some feathery being,
Bursting to the sun;
Like some spirit fleeing,
As the day is done;
Thy race is o'er. Thy life has just begun!

X

Thou couldst gayly teach us,
How our days to spend

In new heavens above us.
Our unconscious end,
Of this short space comes where the soul would
wend.

xi

Strange, these drops of sadness,
Scattering through the light,
Turn our hearts to gladness,
Wakening at the sight
Of so much beauty born within the night!

THE FAUN¹

I

Out into a garden fair²
Strode a faun;
'Mid the flower-perfumed air,
In the morn.

II

Cold and empty had it been,
Till the spring.
Nothing grew; no bird was seen
There to sing.

III

Life had found its winter too
For the faun.

¹ The metre of the poem is that used in some of the forms of the Latin Ode, less common in English poetry, where the lines are so short as often to be considered lacking in strength of feeling or dignity.

² The Ode has been placed here, though it was in reality written in 1894, in London, the last two stanzas, however, having been added in England in 1901.

Cupid ever from him flew.
He was worn.

IV

Weary of an empty race
For the child
Who all men of every race
Hath beguiled;

V

Thus had come into the place
Cupid loves.
There upon the lawn, a race
With the doves,

VI

Runs a little wingéd God,
With his bow,
Whence into the bending sod,
Arrows go.

VII

There remaining, soon they grow
Everywhere,

While their blossoms, as they blow,
Scent the air.

VIII

Such a fairy sight as this
Saw the faun.
Cupid shot at him a kiss.
Love was born!

IX

Sunshine suddenly was spread,
There around.
Flowers grew in every bed,
O'er the ground.

X

Thus in life a garden too,
As the faun,
Is the place where, if we woo,
Love is born.

XI

Maiden, then thine heart retain,
Fair and free;

Cupid soon its surface stain;
Though it be;

XII

Yet shall many a joy be thine,
When 't is gone,
Lost within that holy shrine
Of the faun!

THE CLOUD

I

O THOU soft breath of Heaven that passeth by,
From the unknown, to where we may not see,
Born by the wind of the eternal sky,
From what celestial anger dost thou flee ?

II

In fleecy softness, gathered through the air,
Thou art blown o'er the pale-tinted blue,
Shadows to send, beneath the ocean's lair,
And form new fancies from the evening dew.

III

Through the deep sound of Nature's voice thou art
Silent in passage, swift in airy flight,
But half unseen, yet half inclined to part
From the soft sunshine or aerial light.

IV

Tell those who linger lovingly below,
Who gaze with wonder o'er thy silvery shade,

Where are concealed thy secrets in the flow
Of wind and weather, ere thy beauties fade ?

v

Showers of rain fall from thy weeping eyes,
Oft moistening the parched and mournful
throng;

Tell us thy sorrows, for with tears and sighs
We weep with thee, half knowing of thy wrong.

◦ vi

Hast thou some grief, found in the gathering
storm,

Some tempest hurled in anger to the earth ?
Where are thy missiles, where thy lowering arm ?
The cloud has joined the air that it is worth !

SNOW-FLAKES

I

SNOW-FLAKES fall through leaden air,
Like tresses of celestial hair.
Pale frost enshrouded grains that blow:
Oh, whence to come? Oh, where to go?

II

Tears drop from the weeping eyes,
Accompanying fears or sighs:
Cold snow-flakes, are you tears of Heaven,
Or but the storm's departing leaven?

III

Snow-flakes spin their peaceful robe
Around life's ever turning globe.
For peace comes oft with death alone.
Then peace, come ere these snows have flown!

ON BOARD THE VENTURE

I

At rest within the harbor's peace,
Her sides caressed by gentle waves,
The Venture lies; her sailors cease
From toil: above, the awning saves
The eye from many a piercing ray
Of sun and sky, that burn the face,
And tell of a voluptuous day,
That in its beauty grows apace.

II

Some bird beyond the neigb'ring shore
Sings out a song, that breathes an air
Of half we feel of poet's lore,
Of half we know, within its lair.
And many a vision rises high,
Beyond our view of happy hours,
As in a languid mood we lie,
Dreaming of higher deeds and powers.

III

The trembling pennant far above
Reflects the wind's uncertain air,
And bears on high a sailor's love
Of all he holds in life most fair!
The splash of passing waters' flow
Accompanies some seaman's boat,
As gliding through the ocean low,
Within the harbor she would float.

IV

Thus o'er the Venture's shady deck,
We linger at the sunset hour,
And witness from the distant wreck,
Approaching us, a seaworn rower;
"Oh, shelter here, thou tired mate!
Returned from old to youthful bark.
O'er life's long sea, 't is oft our fate
To find new light from what was dark."

RETURN OF THE CONSTITUTION¹

I

WELCOME, O Warrior of the stormy seas,
To thine adoring home.
Once more shalt thou recline at ease,
Beneath this heavenly dome.
Fast flow our tears of joy; again
They hail thine honored form,
Tattered and with a century's stain,
Borne by the nation's storm!

II

Peace thou hast brought us; peace at Honor's
hand,
Won with thy laurel crown.
Well didst thou bear thy noble band
Of heroes to renown!

¹ These stanzas were written on the occasion of the famous battleship's return to Boston, on March 4, 1897. An enthusiastic public meeting was held in the Old South Church on that date, addressed by the Governor of Massachusetts and other distinguished persons. The poem was written on returning from the meeting.

Then may we turn to greet one leaf,
Remaining yet behind,
And with our cheers, increase belief
In country and in kind.

III

Turn to thy glorious rest, proud ship of war,
That we may hold thy name
All through our land, beyond the roar
Of battle or of fame.
Cleave in our hearts the wondrous thought,
Achievement to attain.
Thus, for our country were we wrought:
To bear and honor pain!

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I

O vast, sepulchral, shaded hall!
Beneath dark shadows of thy wall
We kneel, and in an air divine,
Lay our faint tribute at thy shrine.

II

A space for highest honor made,
By man for man; each stone is laid,
To God's eternal praise of truth,
And our acknowledgment of worth.

III

Rise nobler towers, higher domes
Than these, above historic tombs,
For saints, for heroes, and for kings,
Where grandeur with tradition rings?

IV

Have men of other lands an aisle,
That centuries shall not defile,
Bestrewn with laurel leaves of fame,
Each bearing their immortal name ?

V

Have we a greater gift to God,
Than o'er some graves to lift the sod,
And build in grief a temple fair,
Enshrining life's achievement there ?

VI

Oh, melancholy air of death,
That cometh with each passing breath,
That lingereth near the shaded tomb,
Depart from this exalted gloom!

VII

Thy poisoned arrow's shaft is gone,
When Honor thou hast hither borne,
To lie in this sublime repose,
With bearers of the English rose.

VIII

O Genius, thou art well repaid,
With Honor to be nobly laid:
Here thou hast built a vaster dome,
And immortality its home!

A DIRGE

WRITTEN TO THE BELL OF A CHURCH NEAR
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, WHERE BISHOP
BERKELEY PREACHED

O BELL, peal on, o'er thine unbroken waves
Of deepening sound, that gently bathe my face;
And ring unto eternity the souls —
The souls of the departed dead that sleep.
The trees resound with echoes of their joy,
With songs of long-passed vanity and power,
With tales of woe, with pleasures of their day;
While softer waves wash our repining hearts,
And we invoke pale mysteries from thy dirge.
Oh, tell me of those strange, departed beings
And where they pass, beyond these winds of night
Toward higher goals of their awakening dawn.
The shades fall o'er the pale bewildered eye.
The tones of thy departing sound grow dim.
They fall upon the ear, as on they pass.
Sadly they fade and sadly sing their wail:

• • • • •

“Long have we rung these dirges through the years,

That pass, with wickedness or vain desire.

Pale myrmidons, beyond our reach, cry forth.

A day breaks o'er the scene, as life would close,

And grand eternity shines through the soul.”

Stay! thou art but a thing worn old and gray;
Yet from thee, man may gather many a tune.

Then ring through years unborn; thy voice may fill

Cold hearts with fervor, soft'ning eyes with tears.

Ring then through many a watch; thy song shall bring

New life to sadness in the hour of death!

TO FAME

I

OH, thou art but an idle dream!
I wake: I tremble.
'T was but a fairy sunbeam,
To dissemble
The soft light of fancy;
To wave a laurel crown — a necromancy!

II

But stay: there may be more to Fame.
We wait; we wander.
With each new step, the self-same
Way we render
A new path to power,
And wake at last upon ambition's tower!

TO SPRING

I

HAIL to thee, Spring! Prince of the season's
sway.

Cast off are our dark winter shades!
Leave all dull sadness and cold winds away.
Come! Let us bathe in sunny glades!

II

Hail to the Sun! Burst out of nature's clouds;
Pouring forth light and radiance and love.
Unknowing delights have torn off the shrouds.
Hail! Spring again falls from above!

TO THE SPIRIT ¹

I

GREAT Spirit, hear me as I rove
Through field or forest, wood or grove,
Through wind encircled moods of woe;
Or flee from an approaching foe.
Great Spirit, hear me as I rove;
To conquer wickedness with love!

II

Behold! There comes a wakening voice,
Lipped in its half immortal choice,
That sings from the surrounding shade,
And reaches oft the sunny glade.
Behold! The songs upon the wind
Ring with the breath of life behind!

III

Great Spirit, thy divine refrain
Would turn these mockeries of pain

¹ First published in Boston, June, 1899.

From dull despair to notes of joy,
To life and find the wingéd boy.
Great Spirit, rest, and long remain
Love, ruling earth's enshrouded fane.

TO MUSIC

I

O Music! rain sweet showers of love,
To quench our thirsty heart.
Turn, toward the skies of heaven above,
Pleasures that never part.
Fall, with thy love awakening joy,
In strains that nothing shall alloy!

II

O Music! guard my panting soul,
And stay vain passion's power.
Lead me to the eternal goal.
Clothe inspiration's hour,
Fanning our flights upon the way,
With liquid notes that Gods do play!

POEMS

WRITTEN TO PERSONS AND PLACES



HOCKWOLD HALL¹

TO THEIR HIGHNESSES PRINCE AND
PRINCESS —

LET my thoughts return to Hockwold,
Hockwold ever fair and smiling,
With its fields and paths beguiling
Many a flower in their fold.
Where are then such happy hours
Spent near London's gloomy towers,
Or such charm of country bowers,
Where the city's heart grows cold ?

Noble Prince, thine house extending
Every hospitable sign,
Draws the pen to trace — pretending
To no grandeur in its line —
Yet some vain attempt to mingle
With poetic art my strain;
And from many a talent, single
Those that bear thy royal train!
Of the sports and country pleasures,

¹ Written after a visit at Hockwold Hall.

Where the hand and eye excel;
Of those priceless Indian treasures
On thy walls this pen would tell.
Of fair Hockwold's smiling acres,
Where the pheasant's golden wing
Rises from the autumn keepers,
Yet to fall, these lines would sing.
Of a river winding slowly,¹
On to Ely's ancient tower:
Princess fair, the bark is lowly,
And we guide with waning power.
Yet the evening falls around us;
Still no landing near at hand:
"On to Ely then! Confound us,
If the Princess shall not land!"
Thus two courtiers of the hour
Guide the tiny bark, beyond
Many a fading bank, — each rower
Wishing river were a pond —
Till at last upon its borders
Ely's welcome lights appear.
Land, O Princess! Give thine orders!
"Tie the shallop to the pier."

¹ The latter portion of the poem refers to a river expedition taken with the Princess and another guest, when the party was forced to row a long distance, finally reaching Ely at evening.

While we hastened through the twilight,
Norfolk's village to regain,
I was tempted, ere the daylight,
To repeat this soft refrain:

Let our steps return to Hockwold,
Hockwold ever fair and smiling,
With its fields and paths beguiling
Now three travellers in their fold.
Where are found such treasured hours,
E'en near Ely's holy towers,
Or such charm of country bowers,
On an evening damp and cold ?

Honored Princess, should we ever
In some mirror-linéd hall
Meet again, I fain would sever
From the past — and there recall —
Something that in years shall never
Fail to speak of Hockwold Hall!
Then in all thy radiant splendor,
And an emerald-studded crown,
Norfolk's stream perchance remember,
And some cause for its renown!

1901.

HOLLAND HOUSE¹

TO THE COUNTESS OF ILCHESTER

HISTORIC home, with many a treasured wall,
Where Art the hand of greatness would recall;
Hast thou some pictures, to the mind attuned
In nobler colors than have oft communed
With souls departed from this world's attire ?
May I for one short moment then admire
Thy matchless beauty and thy fair retreat;
Where many a classic heart did often beat
With fire, that turned his day to ruddy hue;
Where many a poet trode, now passed away;
Where many a minstrel sang his sweetest lay;
And where full many a genius gladly found
Congenial thoughts on hospitable ground ?
Hie me in silence unto Rogers' bower,
And from yon fair Elizabethan tower,
The sound of silver trumpets blown in air,
Receive with joy, and many a passion share!

¹ Holland House is the property of the Earl of Ilchester.

Here let me linger with the crownéd Gods;
To join the humbler pilgrim, as he plods
The steep and thorny path that leads to fame,
And know at last the glory of a name!

Where better than in such a bower, to form
Some great ideal, Athene's temple storm;
And mark one onward step to greater power,
That holds the world's advancement as its
dower?

Here rise these halls, where man has well
adorned

The domes that echo what was never scorned;
And here again look down the former host;
Whose star with time no brilliancy has lost;
Whose greatest joy was joy to gather near;
Whose greatest genius, genius to revere.
Then let a pæan of my praise go forth,
And float to south and float again to north.
Let Holland here descend, to grace his home;
Once more receive, once more his pastures roam!

Was it not thou, Macaulay, who didst ask
Where to begin, and, faltering at the task,
Did once relate how fame was here to be,
And thus th' enchanted paradise to see?

Then call to mind, O Muse, the scene again
Where birth and beauty vied with wit and pen,
Where Royal Prince with minister of state,
Decided oft an empire's future fate!
Reveal once more the hostess in her prime,
Around her group the greatest of her time.
Call down these stately figures, one by one,
And for a time their silent canvas shun.
Re-form th' historic pageant through the rooms
Where many a royal treasure proudly looms.
Awake again, thou spark of magic fire,
That causes man his fellows to inspire!
Oh, tear these mists that blind his sightless eyes,
And raise once more his efforts to the skies!

Yet while the vision grows in radiant air,
And past retains the present in its care,
The shadows fall; the guests depart; the air
Resounds no longer with the wit they share.
The ghosts of kings, of princes, and of lords
Return to space in lamentable hordes.

To-day, the masters of this fair abode
Reveal its treasures, and renew their load.
O'er many a meadow bearing Flora's gem,

The crimson wild-flower rears its slender stem.
Through many a path made sacred to the Muse,
A lover's thought the brighter day eschews.
And while the modern world rolls heedless by,
Here have remained these beauties, here to stay.

Then, Time, let not thy ruthless hand impress
One passing finger o'er this magic dress.
Let not fair Holland House return to dust;
Nor from th' historic past be lightly thrust!
May ages yet untold these glories sing;
Through years to come thy greatness still to ring!

1902.

ON A PICTURE OF CHARLES I
AT BRIDGEWATER HOUSE¹

TO THE COUNTESS OF ELLESMORE

BEHOLD on high a monarch in his chair!
Not in the throne of State, nor with his crown,
Nor yet in regal robes, nor with renown;
But bowed in dark yet dignified despair.²
Prepare, O King! thy martyr's fate prepare!

Then in this evil company that cast
Thy throne and sceptre to the earth at last,
Receive this consequence of ruthless fate,
And know the errors of thy soul too late.
Not here do courtiers homage to thine hand;
Not here the best the noblest of thy land!
But stained minions with unreverenced pace,
Blow their foul wreaths of smoke into thy face.³
Ah! But 't is sad to see a king placed here,

¹ The picture referred to hangs on the east wall of the banqueting-room of Bridgewater House, and was painted by Delaroche.

² The picture, which is in the artist's noblest style, depicts King Charles I. seated in a chair after his trial.

³ Around him are soldiers, who are insulting him and blowing smoke from their pipes into his face.

Replete with anguish (more than pride or fear),
Despoiled of regal pomp, of power to pain
Those that in wrath the very air profane!
Condemned and tried by Cromwell's ruthless law,
Sentenced to die, to know the prison door;
Torn from his home, bespattered with his blood,
Alone, o'erwhelmed, submerging in the flood!
Charles, is it thus that England's king must die,
Murdered by those that 'neath his sway should
lie?

Ah, speak again; in honesty atone!
Revoke thy measures; hear thy country's groan!
Retrieve, remount the ladder to thy throne!
And who are these that now attend thy death,
That stand or scoff with irreligious breath?
Where are thy troops, thy court, the gilded
throng?
Oh, where are they, to right so great a wrong?

'T is but a canvas hung upon the wall
That holds full many a treasured gem withal.¹
Yet such a scene would bear the mind again

¹ Bridgewater House, built by the Duke of Bridgewater, is one of the great houses of London and contains a magnificent collection of old masters. It is at present the residence of the Earl and Countess of Ellesmere.

To days long past, yet fraught with royal pain.
Thank God that then our years have no such
sight,

That for their King 't is now his courtiers fight!
Stay! Near this very wall the Royal Heir
To England's throne hath stepped in scene so
fair,

That strangers wondered at its radiant light,
And thanked occasion for so glad a sight.

Here fell his eyes upon this former King.
Mayhap this sorrow through his soul shall ring,
And bear its solemn meaning to the throne,
That for the future marks him as its own.
Such lessons bear at times the painter's art.
Such thoughts the poet oft portrays in part.
Such scenes revealed again, attain their end,
And to new Kings to come their moral lend.

SHOTTESBROOKE PARK¹

SONNET

HERE would the blushing rose the hours of
June

Make sweet with perfume, o'er the summer's
air,

And grace those alleys redolent and fair,
That stretch beneath this half declining moon.
And here let some new minstrel's harp attune
Its strings to the gay dream of country days,
Spent near the smiles and ever gracious ways
Of the fair hostess, in the flowery noon.

Then let me o'er this vista cast mine eye,
And rest with pleasure near the agéd yew;
Mount to the haunted chamber, half in fear,²

¹ The seat of Guy Oswald Smith, Esquire, and the home of the Van-sittarts, from whom it was inherited. This sonnet was written on the occasion of a visit.

² The line refers to the "haunted chamber of the house in which the author slept, — though undisturbed by any evil spirits or ghosts, be it said.

Lest through the night some phantom shade
should fly;
Recall in fancy songs that once were new,
And now are borne again upon the ear!

1901.

CASTELLO DI BRAZZÀ¹

TO THE CONTE AND CONTESSA DI BRAZZÀ—
SAVORGNAN

ON the heights of lovely Brazzà,
Light, my soul, to rest awhile,
Whither Udine's fair piazza
Sends its radiant summer smile.
Here the vineyards warm with sunlight,
And the mountains tipped with blue,
Turn to radiance the twilight
Of fair Friuli anew.
Here the fancies of a lifetime
Find their fullest value; here
Glad the heart; its simple pastime
Spent with nothing sad to fear.
Happy fields in which to wander,
At our ease, in joyous mood,
Growing daily, hourly fonder

¹ Written on the occasion of a visit to the Castle of Brazzà, near Udine, in the province of Friuli in northern Italy. The metre was suggested after reading some lines of Horace.

Of the truths that make men good.
Roses bloom; the lemon blossom
Gives its fragrance to the air,
Sends its magic through my bosom.
Thou, O Friuli, art fair!

1900.

VILLA MARIA

CADENABBIA

ON the shores of lovely Como,
In the soft Italian sun,
Stands a villa — far from Olmo —
Where we gathered, one by one.
'T is a villa tall and stately,
Where the fountain's marble rim
Holds the golden fish, that lately
O'er its surface lightly skim.

There the oleanders bloom,
And above, the olives loom;
There my heart once found its treasure,
And my soul its truest pleasure:
 On the shores of lovely Como,
 Where the oleanders bloom!

From on high, a lovely maiden,
Standing in a loggia cool,
Once desried my own love-laden

Form beside the silent pool.
Then the mountains turned to crimson,
And the purples into blue!
In the soft Italian season,
Then our thoughts were sweet and true.

Where the oleanders bloom,
And the stately olives loom;
On the shores of lovely Como,
Far away from ducal Olmo;
There was born my love of Como!
There my heart would find her soon!

1900.

GREEN HILL

WITHOUT the city's gate there stands
A fair, enchanted group of lands,
Where in the soft breath of the spring,
I came to spend an hour, and there to sing.¹

Stealing out o'er the velvet lawns are shades
That spread deep tones upon the sparkling grades,
And trembling birds bow the breath of May
From waving trees, and sing their cheering lay.
Out of some shady arbors there are born
Light, fragrant odors toward the tiny morn,
While from surrounding beds their perfume
blows,
And dogwood waves above the lilac rows.
O Mistress of these flower-linéd paths,
Where Neptune would allay the playful wraths ²
Of waters, opening to the lily's bed,
Do thou approach with light and graceful tread.

¹ These lines were written during the month of May, on an afternoon, while waiting for the hostess of Green Hill.

² The line refers to a leaden statue of Neptune, around which sprays from a fountain rise, falling again upon lilies surrounding the basin.

Stay! Lead me there, beneath yon marble
form,

That I may linger yet, without the storm
Of life that turns the city's street to war,
Half with mankind and half with nature's law.
These works of art, these fountains from the
south,

That flow with ease from many a lion's mouth,
These lines of green, these tulip-scattered lawns
Would wake to life the heart that feebly mourns.
Do thou then guide my thoughts to fairer skies,
Thou sweet Green Hill, where tranquil pleasure
lies!

1899.

MUSIC AT MRS. S——¹

OH! Wake those strains, that from the lyre
ascend

To twine the heart with roses, that shall lend
New perfume to light zephyrs, wafted off
From sad abodes, that at their sadness scoff!
Come leave this cold north wind, that chills the
heart,

And enter where new sunshine doth impart
Its joy, that riseth from the softer strain
Of music's charm, that o'er the soul shall reign.

I 'd pass in sorrow many an idle hour,
My drooping soul, to feel this subtile power,
That floats far through the airs that here surround
With grace their hostess, ne'er to be refound.
Strange! That a word, a passing smile, a glance,
The fairest hours of life would thus enhance
With truer charms, — one note that shall not
wane —

¹ The lines were written at Lenox during the autumn of 1899, and sent to the lady to whom they were addressed, after hearing some music at her villa.

And bring to youth some old time thoughts
again!

Here in distinction's air we well may rest,
And find sweet solace for the panting breast.
Ah! Honored hostess, here we bow the knee,
And lift our cup in homage unto thee.
Take from the heart full many a feeling strain;
Though rhymes may die, let music still remain!

1899.

SONG OF THE WEST WIND

TO L. W. C.

I

WHAT refrain is the West Wind sighing,
My heart, through the April day ?
By the banks of this river lying,
I hear some faint spirit say :
“ There are visions of unknown gladness
Wafted o’er the faded leaves.
They are blown by the wild wind’s madness,
Thus herald the summer sheaves.”

II

What romance are the pine trees telling,
While bending beneath the sway
Of the gusts that are ever swelling,
To waters with silver spray ?
My frail bark turns around, and wavers
In fear, on the changing breeze.
The bough breaks, yet a voice that quavers,
Bears a sound that we faintly seize.

III

Then in truth is the West Wind singing:
“There comes after winter spring.
Far away are the soft airs flinging
All sadness, to softly bring
The new life of a summer’s brightness,
Born thus from a summer’s day:
Tear away the dead leaves; the likeness
Of heavenly peace lights the way!”

DEATH'S MESSENGER ¹

TO LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON

I

I SAT within a sheltered bower,
One evening when the wind blew low;
And as I dreamed, some unknown power
Bore sounds upon the ocean's flow,
Far o'er the sand to leaf and tree,
And brought their messenger to me.

II

He came alone, a stealthy shadow,
That spoke in whisper soft and dim.
Left by the air, a poisoned arrow
Held his thin garment to his limb.
Fast through the night he swept along,
And bore to me a mournful song.

¹ The title for this poem was suggested by Mrs. Moulton, as were also several alterations from the first manuscript.

III

“Hail! Thou poor mortal of an hour,
That thinkest life may guard thee still:
Thy time hath flown in futile power.
The shades draw nigh, thine hope to kill.
Thy days are done; behold my face.
We twain must run the solemn race.”

IV

“Ah, life!” I cried, “where hast thou gone?
Where are thy days of promised love?
My heart hath known these sorrows long,
That fall like weeping from above.
Then, Death, dark Spirit, loose thy ties;
For I would seek th’ eternal skies!”

1898.

EPITHALAMIUM ¹

TO A LADY

RING out one long, harmonious wedding chime,
Honoring a love, joined at this nuptial hour
In music's fairest strain and fairest power;
And tie true-lover knots. Let roses climb
Above the altar's arch, and scent with thyme
The air that wafts around sweet Hymen's
bower.

Far o'er the seas, I climb the castle tower,
And seek rejoicing tidings that are mine.

Let not a thought of sadness then remain,
That I no longer be near by, to sing
My own hymeneal song. My soul would give
Its fullest wish for joy, untouched by pain,
Its happiest line, while yet the chime shall ring,
And cheer the bride and groom where'er they
live.

1901.

¹ The sonnet was written from a castle in England to a lady in America, on her approaching marriage.

TO ADELAIDE

How fair the name of Adelaide, to rest
In fleeting music, o'er the parted lip.
And yet again, how sweeter still to sip
The nectar flowing from the thought address'd,
In fullest measure from the heart, and dream
Of those uncounted charms that all are thine;
To cheer the happy world where thou dost shine;
And quell its sadness with their magic beam.

Now would my lighter line fill out my page,
And twine with fragrant flow'rs the brilliant life,
That shines upon this radiant spring again.
No thought of any cold or wintry age
Shall pluck from thee the pleasures that are rife,
For cloudless skies their warmth upon thee rain!

1902.

THE GREEN BOOK
OF EARLY POEMS

DEDICATION

LINES WRITTEN ON THE FLY LEAF

I HAD a new green book of idle leaves,
When life was yet half found and all unknown.
But in faint whispers came some early thoughts,
To tell me of the strange, dim things of life.
In quiet moments of repose they formed
Their little pageant o'er the page of youth,
And, such as they may be, are now disclosed,
In all humility and imperfection's dress.

1897.



THE GREEN BOOK

YOUTH is ever green and young.
Then guard thy song of youth, when sung
In the spring of life, and say
'T was but a minstrel's early lay.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

THE old year passes out of sight;
The new comes on apace;
And we look back o'er Time's down-trodden
path.
Our pleasures and our happiness, our sins, our
wrath,
Rise up and greet us face to face;
Advancing with the old year's flight!

1893.

HOW FAST TIME FLIES

AH me! How fast time flies!
How swift the moments go,
That should have made us more than wise,
Had we but once said no
To Satan's smile; if we had twice
Temptation treated so,
To-day would we have had full thrice
The strength that in us lies!

1894.

THE AURORA

A LUMINOUS and meteoric light arose
Last eve, as I my homeward way did wind,
Out of the northern night's repose.
Its deep intensity upon the mind
Impressed itself with many a passing flight,
As mingling in their great majestic way,
Long lines of silver sheen renounced the night,
The calm cold north, where oft they stay,
Unseen, unknown, invisible throughout the day.
And while they shone o'er some celestial land,

I stood before this show of Heaven's hand.
My eyelids closed, to open once again.
The zenith of the sky bore in its train
A thousand splendors gath'ring there around;
While I in rapture listened for a sound,
To give some speech to this strange symbol from
the ground.

But none there came. A stillness half defined
There seemed instead to rest on everything,
A worthy child of darkness and the blind,
More true indeed than when we listen not,
Yet seem to hear unconsciously the ring
Of life and battle, 't is the common lot
Of men to hear whilst in the realm of fight.
But still the sky gave forth its wondrous sight.
And we are left to heed it, or to think
'T is but a flight of Nature's fancy, fair
To see, and seen by men, again to sink
Into its own oblivion and air!

1894.

SONNET

AH, fair and frosty February sky!
Cold as the crystal waters of the deep,
That through the day with sunlight greet the eye,
And mirror thee at night when man 's asleep.

Thy purple canopy is spread sublime,
Bearing the spirit of the winter's night,
Sending its rays of feathered light, each time
We gaze with admiration at the sight.

Thy magically fashioned evening star,
High over all as Vesper sinks to rest;
Thy waning moon, whose misty way doth mar
The light upon the world to east and west:

These and their thoughts, of which the soul is
fond,
Breathe of th' aerial atmosphere beyond.

1894.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A SABBATH MORNING

HAIL unto thee, sublime and wintry morn,
Fairer and yet more fair for thy sublimity!
Thy soft and silvery beams of light are born
From the great emblem of eternity!
I wake, and find me in a jewelled hall,
Dazzling with crystal beams around, above,
A beauty indescribable on all,
That radiant surety of Nature's love.
A myriad of beams, like birds in flight,
Pour forth, a joyous army of delight!
Their lances shining, pierce the misty glass,
Glancing, they gleam as onward they would float
In wondrous majesty, and swiftly pass,
Mantling the air with their new-fashioned coat,
On waves of magic seas into the room,
And purge my soul, and break the Lenten gloom.

And thus my soul awoke from what had been
A long, dark, deep, and melancholy night,
Clouding the youthful visions I had seen,
Ere darker shades had closed about my sight.

My spirit leapt in true and heavenly joy,
Loosed from its thorny bondage of the past,
Clothed in the new-born vigor of a boy
Who finds the longed-for freedom his at last.
A metamorphosis of spirit o'er me came,
Making me one whose sudden minstrelsy
Sang to the sacred multitude around.

I floated forth with them, in ecstasy,
Thus suddenly to know that I had found
A place in the great font of Nature's love,
That often I had seen, afar and dim,
And recognized as something from above,
Addressed in youth with many a prayer and
hymn.

Far into the unknown we swiftly sailed,
Over the cold and wintry airs of dawn.
The sparkling sunbeams left their fairy trail
Over the parting mists of early morn.
Thus through the sky we floated, and away,
Borne by the unresisting heavenly light,
Enveloped in a sense of new delight,
O'er the pale seas of the approaching day.

And then I found me lifted far in air.
The heavenly host retired, and I gazed,

And saw the face of Heaven itself laid bare.
Then suddenly my soul returned, amazed,
To this poor frame that holds it for a space.
I lay upon my bed yet filled with grace,
And rose with joy to meet the sabbath day.
Oh, light me then! Oh, hear my humble prayer!
Cast off my sins, and dry this bitter tear!
And light, O God, the channel of my way!

1894.

SONNET

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE "BOSTON EVENING
TRANSCRIPT," FEBRUARY 13, 1894

AGAIN the Christian's panorama turns
The Lenten season to our saddening gaze;
Sad that the fire of evil ever burns
Within us, through a year of life's dark maze.

And we, in sombre garb with bowing head
Look back upon the moments wasted, lost,
Their numbers causing us to shrink, and dread
The consequences that our follies cost.

We cast aside the pleasures of the past.
Our shattered resolutions to the church
We bring, in hopes that they may be recast.
But faltering at the gate, our hearts we search:

Careless and full of wrong has been the year.
The truth is still so far — and yet so near!

LOVE'S KNOWLEDGE

I

Afar away, there seems to be a distant light
approaching,
Near and ever nearer with a growing force
That wavers often, though 't is always on the
night encroaching,
Changing darkness into light, and slaying
night's remorse.

II

Afar away upon the sea of life there is awak'ning,
With an unknown power, Love's satiety,
Whose mark, as years roll by, the tide of time
will soon be making
On those who without it know not life's entirety.

III

Then is the light upon the sea approaching, and
begetting

Wisdom and a wise man's love of true philosophy ?
Or is the vision vain ? Am I all that I knew for-
getting ?

Surely such a thought would be but vain so-
liloquy.

IV

Ah, yes, it is the heavenly light of earthly know-
ledge growing,

Stronger still and stronger as o'er life we go;
Beloved and loving all around, the seeds of love
still sowing,

Changing darkness into light. Would all the
world were so !

1894.

DEPARTURE ¹

I

To-NIGHT I sleep o'er the deep,
And sleeping still I sail,
I' the dawning of morning,
While night and day are pale.

II

Dear One, I creep for a peep,
In vain for those I leave
Far behind; to my mind
Their holy love shall cleave.

III

So do not weep; rather keep
A glad heart, to bewail
Nor the parting, nor starting
For mountains from the vale!

1894.

¹ The lines were written on board a ship, prior to its departure.

ON A LITTLE CHILD

A FRAGMENT

I

I MET a little child the other day.
So fair was she, she might have been a fay,
 Or sprite, she was so bright.
 I lost myself in love,
And found new pleasures at the sight.

II

Alas! My love must unrequited go.
For in some younger channel hers did flow.
 At first, I half had curs'd:
 She was indeed so like
One who had satisfied Love's early thirst.

III

A fair and childlike "Juliet" she made,
Her tiny ringlets hanging, as she bade
 A fond farewell, for aye
 It seemed to her,
As "Romeo," like Cupid, fled away!

1894.

THE CHATELAINE OF SAINT AIGNAN

I WALKED along an avenue of trees,
Straight, though their time-worn trunks showed
growing signs
Of age and wrinkles, to the whispering breeze,
And told of bygone histories in misty lines.

Nor with beginning nor a settled end,
Their course unerring held a stately guard
High o'er the ground, that in a ragged bend
Reviewed the winding river, stern and hard.
Behind there rose, out of the morning sun
The ancient walls — carved in that master hand,
The Gothic Renaissance hath ever won
Through this fair land —
Of an old chateau rising proud and high
Above the mediæval walls out of the town.
Below it nestled, seeming weak and shy;
Like some fair maid beneath this noble crown.

I turned, and saw a trooper flying past.
His steed, hung with its armor cold and gray,
Fled o'er the shaded avenue so fast,

That as I rose to draw myself away
From his strange path, that in its swiftness led
Beyond the canopied retreat wherein I stood,
I turned; and with a cold, unearthly dread,
Lest in my reveries and lingering mood
I should be cast by him aside.
His fleeting course wound ever on
In a strange, ghostly, spectral ride,
That seemed the race of an enchanted one
Upon the soft earth and the grass beneath.
A moment's pause upon the rustling air
Showed that above his brow a plaited wreath
He wore, of branches half unknown but fair,
Brought from far lands that he had proudly won.

Arrived before the chateau's ancient door,
He halted, resting the while half in air;
Then sprang from saddle to the leafy floor
That lay beneath, and called his Lady Fair.

And while I looked in wondering fear, I saw
Float from the upper casement a light form,
Clothed all in white; and on her head she bore
Chaplets of roses circling to her arm,
And in her hand held one as fair as she;
And smiling kissed the rose, and fell betime

Into the trooper's fond embrace, to be
At the next moment torn away! A crime
Had been committed, now full many a year,
Upon the mistress of the chateau here;
Yet still her lover to her charms did bow,
And in the sunny noontide leave her bier,
And find her spirit lovingly as now!

1894.

THE FAIRY PRINCESS

THERE lived within her palace of delight
A Fairy Princess, fair to look upon,
Whose countenance was an enchanted sight,
That made all other beauty pale and wan,
And fade in sad and dim comparison.
There in the midst of vast, innumerable halls,
Of crystallized or jewelled stalactite,
And many a precious gem, within their walls,
Throwing their richly colored beams to right,
To left, above, below, on every hand;
So that the eyes were ravished at the sight,
And perfumes far beyond conception, fanned
The nostrils with each faintest wave of air:
There, in the midst of this ecstatic lair,
A veritable shrine and paradise,
And seated amid bowers that would entice
The sternest and most austere man to love,
Or admiration of the place, its Mistress sat.

Her courtiers with gay dissipation strove
To cheer her, stretched upon a Persian mat,

Scented with spices and sweet fragrant airs,
That swept the nostrils with their varying kinds;
And gathering round the throne, in eager pairs,
Hummed their soft music to the Eastern winds.

Yet as she sat, in half desponding mood,
A white-winged falcon floated through the hall,
Holding within its beak an olive branch;
And for a moment, near the throne it stood,
And perched on high, and swept against the wall,
And on the Princess dropped the fatal branch.

Then through the courtiers passed a sudden
stir;

Thus to perceive a bird from Greenland's peak,
Here in the air of frankincense and myrrh,
Alive through climates, where the eastern streak
Of early dawn destroys the northern heather;
Here, in defiance of the winds and weather,
Circling the fairy palace of their Queen.
Ne'er in this hall had such a sight been seen,
As the white falcon in a southern clime,
Far from its native snows and icy sheen,
Showing its speckled wings in summer time.

Then, to the wonder of her courtier train,
The Princess rose, and with a rapturous smile

Held forth her arm, and made it straightway
plain

That the swift bird her languor should beguile.

Circling the jewelled hall again, he lighted
On the fair hand of his awaiting queen,
And thus, unknown, his fairy troth was plighted;
For the next moment those around had seen
Change the white falcon to a Prince delighted!

Oh, happiest moment of the fairy realm!
The Princess now a Queen, the Prince a King,
Th' enchantment of a lifetime overwhelm,
And seal their union with the magic ring!

1894.

TO MY LADY LOVE

I

So far away my thoughts did rove
Last evening, that they formed a ditty,
Worthy of nought, nor wise, nor witty;
Yet such as it is, 't is to my Lady Love:

II

Thou art indeed a fairy maid,
To hold my heart, my soul; to dally
With so unsought a love; to sally,
With a sweet summer's blush on thy features
laid.

III

Ah, but, my gentle lady, pray,
While I gaze on thy fairy beauty,
Give to thy swain this pleasant duty,
Here at thy feet, his hand and heart to lay!

1895.

THE QUESTION

I

Dost thou love me, as I love thee ?
As I love one, dost thou love two ?
Or is it — as I thought I knew —
That thou lov'st me, as I love thee ?

II

Do I love *thee*, as thou lov'st me ?
I know not. But if I 'm not true,
No man e'er loved: I would I knew
That I to thee was all thou art to me !

1895.

A BRIDAL SONG

I

COMES there a time when God above
And men below would join in love,
Or happiness more bright and gay,
Than on a lover's wedding day ?

II

Lives there a moment, ne'er forgot,
More sacred to the earthly lot,
When blushing maid with conquered man,
Before an altar join the bann?

III

Then ring this merry peal of bells:
Of earthly paradise it tells;
Forever old, forever new;
Forever sweet, and ever true.

IV

Oh, strike the bell, and send thy gift,
Before this marriage day shall lift
The wedding veil from off thine eyes,
Showing new joys and sunny skies!

1897.

SUMMER HOURS

I

SUMMER hours! To float away,
And seek some distant nook,
Where in the warm breath of the day
We find some busy brook.

II

Summer hours! To cast aside
The city's smoke and war,
And lightly carry off our bride,
To live in Love's sweet law!

III

Summer hours! To tear apart
All that is worst in life;
To pluck, in June, some lover's heart;
'T is thus we banish strife!

1897.

THE ENCHANTRESS

I

I CAME at evening as I rode,
To where the sea sinks from the land,
And leaves a shadowy abode,
To rise out of the ocean's hand.

II

And as the steep incline I gained,
The shaded outlines of the home
Of some fair mistress half refrained,
And half allowed the eye to roam.

III

Yet as the soft air fanned the head,
The door turned, and disclosed the form
Of the Enchantress, who had led
My steps from the approaching storm.

IV

Sweet Lady, may I then remain
With thee, an hour of fancy spend ?

(For fancy often we would fain,
To our own heart's desire lend.)

V

To drink, in cool refreshing draught,
To the Enchantress and the place,
While laurel branches faintly waft
Sweet odors o'er the languid face.

VI

Yet, fair Enchantress, even shades
Steal on apace, and I away
Must hie me, ere the twilight fades
Into the enemy of day.

VII

Then, ere we part, one word I breathe;
One, after many in music's sound
From thy fair voice would I bequeath
Unto this sea-encircled mound.

VIII

Turn once again the long lost door,
That I may find within its fold

This hospitable hall once more,
And feel the subtle charm of old!

IX

Farewell! The shadows longer grow.
Life passes on; the years ride by.
Time turns the glass of hours that flow.
Turn once again, and let it lie.

X

Ah, then, Enchantress, may this rest
Be oft repeated, as I ride
O'er the broad seas, that serve at best
To bring two mortals side by side!

1897.

MEMORY

I

AN old house stands upon the hill,
With memories my heart to fill
As I retrace these long lost days,
Enjoyed amid its peaceful ways.

II

There are indeed few things that dwell
Upon the heart, their joys to tell
In after years, more full of peace
Than those few things that shall not cease.

III

We speak of friends: 't were better said,
Some higher path than mortals tread
Leads them in time to nobler hearts,
Beating with love that never parts.

IV

To those who toil upon the hill
Of life, they seem untutored still;
To sport upon the quick'ning sod,
Where older feet have sadly trod.

V

To those beyond they stand as men
Who bear the shadow of a fen,
Folding within its treacherous creek
Their youth, whene'er its haunt they seek.

VI

Yet to the hill, our journey o'er,
We would retrace our steps once more,
And live again one youthful hour,
Where friendship held so fair a power.

VII

The house still stretches wide its door.
Some footsteps, echoing o'er the floor,
Fade out again. But where are they
Whose hearts gave forth the joyous lay ?

• • • • •

VIII

Some say that Memory is dear,
To those who for the future fear.
Yet would I still remain the last,
Held by dim shadows of the past!

1897.

THE STREAM

I

WHAT is it in yon stream I hear?
Such music ne'er hath reached my ear,
As from the meadow wanders up,
Born like some magic loving cup?

II

And whence doth rise this soft refrain,
To feed my heart, and fill the brain
With every sound that spring may bring,
And in its melody to sing?

III

The note seems like an echo brought,
As o'er the western wind is wrought
The gentler sound, the peaceful dream
Of some rejoicer in the stream.

IV

Of its new life, we know nor care,
Save if its voice be in the air.

Of its own happiness we feel
But this, as on the grass we kneel.

V

Of its dark bed, beneath the veil
Of sunlit waters, through the dale;
Of its chance care, its toil or woe,
What may we human beings know ?

VI

But if in Springtime life doth sing,
Let us rejoice with this plain thing;
Our voice joined to its heaven-tuned air;
And live an hour in nature's lair!

1897.

FUTURITY

I

Is there an unseen hand within the soul,
To pierce these shades of dim Futurity ?
Or are we beings born to know no goal
And take life's passage in security ?

II

Yet as the heart pours out its own deep thought,
A light, an unknown harbinger of day,
Breaks in the distant scene (where there was
nought
But cold and darkness), with a brilliant ray.

III

There are indeed more treasures in the years
That roll in unknown numbers at the feet
Of all frail mortals than the ocean bears
To watery Neptune in his cold retreat.

IV

Let us then seek to tread the Soul's fair way
Into the far gray atmosphere above,
Leaving all thoughts unhonored by our day
To fall and perish in the realm of love.

1896.

ANNIVERSARY¹

I

As old and honored Time flies by,
In his strange circle of the year,
There comes a moment when we sigh:
The winter dies, and spring is here.

II

This season brought into our life
The first impressions of a place,
Made dear to us amid the strife
Of youth, and dearer as we face

III

Our world, in its uncertain light,
As unknown promises arise,
As we pursue the earnest flight
From darker clouds to brighter skies.

IV

Tell us, dear place, where first we found
That life was more than we had thought;

¹ Written on the occasion of "Anniversary Day" at St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H., June 3, 1897.

As in affection we abound,
May we return where we were taught.

V

And once again as summer's air
Has wafted in its sweet refrain,
And turf and tree grow green and fair,
We find St. Paul's our home again.

VI

Then to her Chapel we would go,
And honor those who lie beyond,
Join in her games, or swell the flow
Of youth beside the glimmering pond.

VII

Seek with me yet again the brook,
Where on a time I used to spend
A treasured hour with friend or book,
And stones into the water send.

VIII

Tell us once more that life is well,
That those departing still return
To organ note, to peal of bell,
As in their hearts thy fires burn.

IX

Then let us raise a final cheer,
 Guarding its echoes as we go,
 And keep the Anniversary here,
 That marks these numbering years that grow.

1897.

TO OUR MOTHER¹

I

OH, thou first guardian of a man's own heart,
 The hero's truest friend,
 Thou, who with tears hast seen his youth depart,
 And time its sadness lend
 To his advancing life:
 Where may he turn for aid, when thou hast
 passed the strife?

II

Tender in care and thoughtful in thy love,
 Thou art the noblest one
 Of all his thoughts that lead to paths above.
 As the dark waters run

¹ Written on the birthday of the author's mother.

O'er his half lighted path,
Thine everlasting constancy deters their wrath.

III

There is one day within each busy year
When we may pause to bow,
Or kneeling bend and leave a joyful tear
On thy belovéd brow,
And wish for a return
Of this same day upon life's ever changing urn.

IV

Rejoice with us, for our own Mother lives,
All who have known her love;
For the diviner breath of Heaven still gives
Its treasure from above
Unto its worthy sons;
That it may rest and sanctify while their life runs.

1897.

TO LADY MARY

ON HER BIRTHDAY

I

SIXTEEN or twenty-one, to-day ?
Ah, that is difficult to say,
So wreathed in youth and graceful charm,
Is she toward whom we bend our arm !

II

A couplet scarce could hold the health
We drink to happiness and wealth.
A triple verse were better far,
To reach a heart that nought should mar !

III

Sixteen or twenty-one, I say.
Wouldst thou not tell us, Lady May ?
Still, let thine age be what it be,
Thou art both young and fair to me !

1897.

DREAMS

I

SWEET dreams, gentle dreams,
Fraught with visions of delight,
Fill all my waking hours with beams
Of new and radiant light.

II

Soft dreams, peaceful dreams,
Known but to the joyous soul,
Reveal an imagery, that seems
The God of all my goal.

1897.

LINES WRITTEN AT SUNSET

AH, deepening circles of the setting sun!
What volumes to my soul would you unfold,
O'er the wide wintry course my life has run,
Of laurels lost, of victories yet untold!

Thus would I love to dream away my days;
My fleeting visions fraught with flames of fire,
To light some men upon their tortuous ways;
That ere I died I might the world inspire!

1897.

L'ENVOI

I CLOSE the new Green Book of idle leaves,
Now filled, and older with the years of youth
That have thus passéd by in health or pain.
And as I turn the pages of my heart,
I find some passages are graven here
With the imperfect chisel that we hold,
When first we carve the future with our hand.
Yes, dear gray Time, I bless thy passing step,
Though it oft brings its load of care and toil,
Yet leaves upon us the impress of life,
The wedded harmony of joy and woe.

1897.

UNFINISHED POEMS AND
FRAGMENTS



LINES WRITTEN IN NORMANDY

A NORMAN landscape with a cloak of green,
That might full tell us of a land of love,
Where we forget our grief in thoughts on high:
An hillside, where the faint beams of the sun
Fall in their gentle light upon the scene,
And make the heart beat with the thoughts of
love,

Or love's own fancy in its fairy hour:
Such is the place, where in an idle mood
I brought myself, to dream away the time
Of early sunset though invisible.

The cuckoo's note fell soft upon the ear,
To drown the lighter sounds of summer even,
In its own deeper tone of melody.
The faint caw of some thievish crow disturbed,
Its distant cadence lent unto the air.
And soon I found myself, though not asleep,
Yet moved, as by some higher, natural power
Than we do know as inmates of the world.
A wandering mood took hold upon my heart;

And without thought of any plan but this,
My soul strayed far beyond the hillside and the
scene.

Thus in a magic moment's time, it fled
Back to the days of long unburied past;
When the great Conqueror sallied from his shores
To found an Empire's power by his sword,
Or the fair Maid of Rouen, burned with fire,
Sought for her deeds a martyr's tragic end.

Lifted in thought; the air seemed filled with
glory,

And to my vision showed a future state,
Tranquil and filled with peace and songs of birds,
And unattended by the sounds of war.

There the soft land of Normandy displayed
Its smiling valleys, where the silky herds
Grazed happily, and ran with milk betimes.
And as the sun broke over radiant France,
I saw its peace revealed through years to come,
Shorn of its kingly glories though it be,
Yet blessed by deep-felt joy and tranquil laws.
No more shall tyrant cause the Norman maid
To pierce the heart of man, besmeared with
blood,

Nor Marat yet again a Corday bring
From the dark agonies of anarchy!

Here in thy peaceful pastures let me dream,
Casting all evil from the drooping eyes,
And on thy meadowy couch find rustic joy,
As eventide draws fragrance from the day!

1894:

LINES WRITTEN IN DEJECTION

A DEEPENING melancholy shades the hour,
That should be privileged in early life;
A pall of sadness covering the power,
That is youth's gift, to battle through its strife.
A cruel hand has cast my sacred hope
Into this deep, unfathomable woe,
Where with Dejection I must vainly cope,
And leave my vanished happiness below.

1894.

“TO BE WITHOUT”

To be without one day of peace,
One idle thought, one tear: to cease
The occupation of an hour
For other cares; nor feel the power
Of blest simplicity, to shower
Its fragrant joy:—this is not life.
'T is but an everlasting strife.

1897.

LIFE

O LIFE, thou art indeed to me
Dull pain and wretchedness and hate,
Joys and delights too vast to see,
Tormenting dreams of power and fate,
A wondrous, overwhelming mass!

1897.

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER WAKING FROM A DREAM

A voice within the watches of the night
Sang to me, "Rise and ride into the dawn.
There shalt thou find new powers from the
world,
And turn to light the darkness now that reigns."
I raised the girdle of my sword, and woke
The guards who lay beyond my couch, and
found
The latch of the great door, that bound the
world
Of mine own self from that without the gate.
A passing hawk flew by, with fleeting wing,
A circling omen of th' approaching wind;
And I rode onward, with my men behind,
Like warriors of the old, old days now dead;
And suddenly beheld the plain of life!

• • • • •

1897.

ENVY AND DISCONTENT

ENVY and discontent rode forth.
They drew strange clouds of woe,
That floated from the south to north,
 Unto the world to go.
“Curse on thy fair success,” sighed one.
“I hate thee!” cried the other;
“Thou hast the prize I should have won!”
And thus they passed together.

1897.

HAPPINESS

AH, Happiness! why hast thou flown away ?
Time was when thou didst linger
Near to my soul, and point thy magic finger
Toward the warm sun, that streaming through
 my day,
Brought visions of unsought and true delight
That now, alas, are lost within the night!

1897.

THE DEATH OF SUMMER

FAIR Summer lies upon a bed of flowers,
With leaves half faded as she dreams in peace.
The air blows o'er her couch with chilling breath,
And yet she slumbers, as she still reclines.
Pale votaries of warmth grow gray and weary
Falling around with faint and fainter life.
And yet the Goddess of it all doth sleep.

Oh, wake! For thou art now indeed still
bathed

In beauty and in youth! Awake, awake!
For thou hast yet some space in which to live,
When thou may'st give thy radiance to earth.
Oh, wake! Why dost thou lie so cold and numb
In silence and in mutability?
The Goddess keeps her deep tranquillity,
Even as our cry doth hold its saddening note.

Arise! But thou art dead! Ah, thou art dead,
To slumber now until the pregnant spring,
In joy revealed, gives birth to thee again.
E'en now the frosty air comes flying by!
Autumn, thou dying ember of the year,
Approach! 'T is thine the hour in which to live.

Pale Summer sleeps, and thou indeed dost reign
In golden splendor o'er the fleeting day!

1897.

AUTUMN

THE first faint breath of Autumn in the air
Would turn pale Summer from her drowsy bed;

To give one last sigh of despair,
When leaves are turning red.

Oh, wake th' autumnal lyre and away!
To sing the sad song of the dying year.
For thou hast yet, in Heaven, a prayer to say
For those that linger here.

1897.

LINES ON NATURE

WRITTEN IN SPRING

I STRAYED out, far into the country-side,
One sunny day, and found myself alone;
And wandered there among sweet shady trees,
Where the caress of honey-scented Spring

Had drawn light blushes o'er their maiden boughs,
And sent its spray of foliage on every hand.

Tell me, strange life of Nature, thus observed,
Where we are found by God, who lives in us,
And speaks to the true hearted in a voice
Unknown to those who love not gentleness,
Where art thou hidden, in mysterious shades
Of our existence that in Heaven had birth?
There are strange thoughts that well within our souls,

As we grow swiftly into early manhood:
Casting aside the trappings of our youth,
We stand forth boldly o'er the stage of life,
And gaze in awe upon our destiny.
And there appears before our untrained eyes
A light, as we do search th' horizon's line,
All filled with an anxiety to learn
Some secrets from our own surrounding world.

Truth! Though in our pale ignorance we turn
From thy diviner power in later years,
And fall into strange chasms of ourselves,
Thou art forever the approaching guide

222 LINES WRITTEN BY WAYSIDE

To nobler realms and great accomplishment!
High o'er the brow, in majesty thou floatest,
As we would fain pursue life's fitful way;
And as we seek for thee, thou may'st descend,
Crowning with greater joy our victory.

1897.

“TO BREATHE SWEET ODORS”

To breathe sweet odors, and in peace,
To turn from silent toil, to cease
In one short moment sounds of woe;
Finding love with us would go:
 This is life, tranquil life,
 Free from all discordant strife.

1897. ,

LINES WRITTEN BY THE WAYSIDE

OVER the heavy air of early summer
Arose the hum of many a pleasing voice,
Born from the sylphs that lined the shady dell,
Wrapt in the warmth of an enchanted hour.

The breath of our belated, panting steed
Came fast, as we at ease withdrew our rein.
Murky below, the stream wound sulkily,
A way that knew no willing source nor goal.
The voices rose, and we in joy refrained
From pressing forward on our wayward course.

And listening to the happy sounds of summer,
That came and went in many a note of joy,
Heavy the eyelids grew by music's fan,
And soon we fell with heaviness asleep.

And there we dreamed of magic fairy forms;
While sylphs came dancing forth in wingéd
groups,
That spread around our fancy love-born showers,
And kisses fell upon the lips half closed,
And visions of the fairy dell revealed
New pleasures that in life are all unknown.
The tall trees waved above the sultry air.
Each flower within this dreamy land, bedewed,
Lay trembling with a watery diamond,
And moonbeams played with shadows by our
side,
While whispering soft sweet pleasures in the ear.

1897.

LIFE AND DEATH

AH, how these shades and shadows form
Our own dim selves, defaced and torn
By journeys o'er the surging seas
Of Life or Death, without release!
Then would I pass, to unknown hours
Bedecked with honey-laden flowers;
And know no more of life than this:
To live 'neath one eternal kiss.

“TO LOVE YET NE’ER BE LOVED”

To love, yet ne’er be loved, ah me!
This is the keenest pain of all.
To feel one being near, to see
 Love’s tower fall;
To lisp the poor dull panting song,
That bears each image of our lifelong hope;
To weep, to sigh, to sadly long,
And in despair to mope —

1898.

FRAGMENT

OH, that I were once more upon the sea,
To Merrie England bound, my love, with thee;
Or in its place, to some soft climate led
By the south wind, upon a mossy bed!

1897.

“LEAVE ME BUT A CHILD”

OH, leave me but a child of Nature,
As I live,
To dwell beside some simple pasture;
There to give
Each happy hour
The nobler power
That we breathe into life;
And I may rise over the blue,
With only a few,
Where happiness is rife.

1897.

“SO YOUNG AND YET SO OLD”

So young and yet so old,¹
To be a poet and live!
So lightly to enfold,
All that we would forgive,
In childhood’s hour;
Its later power,
To cast o’er sea and land.
To wave above thy magic wand
That stays — these are thy subtle ways,
O Genius, that despair repays!

1897.

OVERTURE ²

WELL then to thoughts and chance poetic fancies,
Such as they be, I would devote these leaves
Made tender by the hand of friendship’s tie,
And dedicate at their first opening,
To make some confidence beneath its clasp!

1897.

¹ These lines referred to a person known to the author.

² First written for the *Spirit of Love*, but afterwards rejected, as a dedication.

LINES TO CONTE CARLO EMO

ACCOMPANYING A PICTURE

WOULDST thou receive these lines, good friend,
That with my features I would send
To thee, but yet with many a sigh
That long drawn years have passéd by,
Ere I had vowed to lay my head,
A'wearied, o'er Italia's bed ?

1898.

TOURAINE

SOME YEARS AFTER VISITING IT

AH, fair Touraine! how wouldst thou hold my
heart,
As thy pale dreams, awakening joy, impart
To my poor soul, that haunts the stones laid
bare;
And breathe again thine history-laden air!
Sweet are thy groves and light, thy sunny skies;
Happy each cloud that o'er their surface flies;

228 LINES WRITTEN AT VERSAILLES

Graceful thy towers that toward the heavens
arise,
Crowning those jewels that the world would
prize.

1898.

LINES WRITTEN AT VERSAILLES

IN THE PARK NEAR THE BASIN OF NEPTUNE

Now would I wind my peaceful days
Round these fair woods, these silent ways!
For here pass'd Vanity has laid
A crown of beauty o'er the head,
An air of sentiment that dwells,
In these now long deserted dells.
Here courts and crownéd women sang,
And with their loves these echoes rang!

1900.

LINES WRITTEN AT HAMILTON

WHILE SEARCHING FOR A SUITABLE PLACE IN
WHICH TO WRITE SOME POETRY

I AM making a primary tour of inspection,
To find some bucolic and kindly protection;
To rest in the wood, in profoundest reflection;
Or bathe me in Hamilton's gay predilection!

Still homeless, in search of a house, I am seen
Now disporting myself with a book on the green;
Now tearing my hair for a rhyme to "between,"
Or refraining from thoughts — till I know what
they mean!

Yet the ways of a poet have some compensation.
He 's poor; but his joy — 't is the world's com-
mendation.

Posterity honors, though never repays
Half the care or the pain that he spends on his
lays!

Yet if fame he can hold at the end of his life,
He will gladly espouse the fair Muse as a wife,
And go down to his grave — though he starve by
the way —

With an happier heart than most men of his day!

1898.

STONEOVER

WRITTEN WHILE WANDERING THROUGH THE
WOODS AT STONEOVER, LENOX

I'VE found a bank where stones and sprays
Of pattering water find their ways,
Through woods and fields and pastures gay,
Where man with nature seems at play;
Through weeds and rushes that shall tell
My secrets to the fairied dell.
For here I pour my heart's delight,
And with the sunshine take my flight.

1898.

A WELCOME

WRITTEN ABOVE THE DOOR OF A ROOM

HE who may enter this my shrine
Shall share with me my cup of wine,
And find warm welcome in the bowl,
To cheer his heart and find my soul.

1898.

EPITAPH

TO A FALLEN TREE

FULL many a year of silent toil to-day
Falls in an hour beneath the woodman's blow,
And nature mourns as he the homeward way
Of man, rejoicing to destroy doth go.

1898.

THE INN ¹

AN old, old Inn,
Partly akin;
Partly a legacy to win
The passing traveller, weary, wise,
To rest him here beneath the skies.
A draught of ale, a drop of gin —
What matters life? The wheel doth spin;
And we must end where we begin.

1897.

¹ Lines written upon the door of a room at the Groton Inn.

THANKS TO AN OLD WOMAN¹

I SAT within this hall, to rest
(An ancient house that Time hath blest):
Thanks, kindly mistress; may good cheer
And God be with thee many a year!

1897.

UNREQUITED LOVE

LOVE that is unrequited, or untuned
By honor's voice, or where the heart is given
In holiest form, yet finds but paltry seed
Sown on the highways of the lighter sort,
Were best returned to that high shrine from
 whence it came,
And death dealt out to those that toy with life.

1899.

¹ Written to the mistress of an old house, on receiving some hospitality.

BRIDAL FANFARE

DING, dong, wedding bells,
Ring wherever Hymen dwells!
Away, away! Arise the day,
When happiness the God foretells!

1898.



COUPLETS

OTIS

WRITTEN ON THE DOOR OF A ROOM AT OTIS,
AFTER COMPLETING THE "SPIRIT OF LOVE"

HERE have I passed inspired days,
With Poesy's art and peaceful ways.

SORROW

SORROW, some note of future joy shall bring,
To harbinger th' approach of early spring.

JOY

BUT joy some pang of sorrow still retains,
That pierces half the pleasure that remains.

1898.

WEALTH

AH, but the power of wealth deters mankind
From many a thought of nature he might find!

ART AND POVERTY

ART unto poverty her face must turn,
Herself create, the world her effort spurn!

1902.

LOVE

GIVE me but love, ideal, undeterred;
And to the heavenly sphere my soul is stirred!

WORK

NOT in this world may man find fairy bowers:
By work alone shall he attain his powers.

SUCCESS

CLAIM but success, and count it all thine own.
The world shall follow, and the gods atone.

1902.

POETRY

THE art Divine, the highest thought of man:
Woo it, alike possess it if you can.

PAINTING

GIVE unto Painting beauty, strength sublime;
Color to thoughts that from the soul shall climb.

SCULPTURE ¹

CARVE me the marble statue of the Greek:
Something divine, although it may not speak!

MUSIC

THE melodies of Nature, known to Pan,
Revealed, attuned, attributed to man.

1902.

¹ Variation: Carved out of marble, statues by the Greek;
Something divine, that needs but life to speak!

LETTERS IN VERSE



A LETTER

TO MRS. P—— AND MRS. B——

DEAR MRS. P—— AND MRS. B——

A tale of woe is this, from me:
Music, our Muse, revered, divine,
That cheereth when our hearts repine,
Flies from my presence; and despair
Fills now my soul — and tears my hair!

Picture my misery, noble friends,
When the inspired Orpheus sends
His sweet sounds — softer than the air
Of summer — wan with ceaseless care,
I still remain without his groves,
Filled with pale imageries and loves!

In this sad mood from cares I flee,
To those whom I had thought would be
Fair Consolation and Repose
From these dark, self-abandoned woes.

¹ This letter, written to two ladies celebrated not only for their wit but for their musical talents, was a humorous request that they should play to the writer some of the music of Beethoven, Mozart, and Bach.

May I then once but lightly tread
Your hill, and there my soul re-wed
To Music, and my heart to joy,
As you your wondrous arts employ.

Ah, let me one short hour recline,
While you pour forth those sounds divine,
That turn our shadows into light,
Destroying phantoms of the night.

Long have I wished to list awhile
To those whose sounds the hours beguile.
Long have I tried to shower in vain
Light fancies over flattery's train.
Long have I lived, but to decline
In poesy's favor and repine!
Long have I suffered; now I pray
That I may hear these Muses play!

Beethoven sounds grave nature's horn.
Mozart throws light o'er pathways worn.
Bach hath delighted ears grown cold.
Pass but once more some passage old.

Ah, noble Muses, thus you see
A suppliant kneeling — little me —
Thirsting but for a favor'd hour
To waft my soul from tree to tower.

Hearts are not cold beneath such grace.

Souls have shone through the passing face.
Notes sound within us; as without
Music shall melancholy flout.

Play but once to these eager ears:
Then shall my Muse dispel vain fears.
Let verse thus advocate my whim;
And gratitude mine eyes shall dim.

1898.

A LETTER

TO A LADY, AFTER MISSING AN APPOINTMENT
FOR CHURCH

MY DEAR MISS D—

Admonish me!

I woke to-day, long after eight,
Crying aloud, “Too late, too late!”

For thus so truly Morpheus arms
His guards, that he perforce becalms
The senses — and religion’s air,
That would to church with lady fair.

What shall I say, or write, or do,
To be forgiven now by you?
Sleep is but Nature’s homely law;

And man was made with many a flaw.
Then, if we live, we are but human,
Forgiveness doth belong to woman!
Now, since upon my bended knee,
Repentingly, I fain would be
Still earnest, though asleep I lie,
Pray pass my misdemeanor by.

1898.

A LETTER

SENT ON CHRISTMAS EVE, WITH AN ODE TO
ANACREON

DEAR MRS. R—— AND DEAR MISS C——

These lines of rather faulty knowledge
(Acquired nor at school nor college),
Congratulations bear from me.

Ringing a merry Christmas chime,
They carry with their tune a rhyme,
Not worthless, and not yet sublime!
They fly from country into town,
And seek at last to gain renown
For one whose pile of growing songs
Depict life's many joys or wrongs.

Full many a time I 've sought to find
Something, around your hearts to wind.
But now I send this tiny ode
(To fair Anacreon's fancy owed),
Produced far from your genial board,
Yet thinking of its generous hoard.

Prithee, dear ladies, take these lines.
And may they mingle with your wines.
Upon them cast one fleeting look,
And, better still — just read my book!

I've carried to these wooded dells
Of Sudbury's slope, a thought that dwells,¹
And sinks in memory's softer eyes,
Like to ambrosia from the skies.
May the new year its happiest days
Bring to these hostess' of my lays.
Then, were there pleasure more than meet
To join with viands, than to treat
Our souls to gentlest wit the while,
Or Epicurus to beguile ?

1899.

¹ This letter was written from Longfellow's famous Wayside Inn, immortalized by him in the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*. It is situated at South Sudbury, near Boston.

A LETTER

TO THE POET BUTTERWORTH

(Written at Christmas time from the Wayside Inn)

DEAR FRIEND, now many weeks I 've waited
(My thought of you not yet abated),
To hear your footsteps o'er the floor,
That creaks and bends about my door,
That echoes many a soul now gone,¹
And many a deed by hero done!
Indeed, this Inn has not yet seen
Your form since in it I have been.

And yet your spirit haunts the room,
Where you had promised once to come.
Then take these words that wish you well;
For many an idle tale I 'd tell.

My first-born child — a book — I send,
Ere the New Year a moon may bend.
I pray you keep it near your heart,

¹ When writing these lines the author was occupying a room at the Wayside Inn, used by Longfellow. The Inn was the haunt of many famous men, including Emerson, Hawthorne, and others.

And let your favor find some part;
Coming too late for Christmas eve,
Yet at your door good cheer 't would leave.
May Time his blessings to you show,
And to your soul some joy bestow!

1899.

A LETTER

TO AN UNCONSCIONABLE FLIRT

FAIR damsel, bathed in beauty's smile,
Wherewith the playful hours beguile
In coquetry their light possessor,
Hie to your guardian or confessor!

Yet, in captivity your eyes
Play havoc with your swains, and sighs
Too deep for happiness reveal
The gentle agony they feel.
Then would I wisely hold without
This charméd circle — little doubt,
With what sincere regard I flee —
Your friend, but *not* your swain to be!
I cannot, will not come to tea.

Then pray forgive this frank admission.

Let wisdom grant its own decision,
And keep me from this false position.

How many stalwart friends have I,
Now sick of love, content to die,
Their lives despoiled of happiness;
Yet not allowed one small caress!

How many swains are wounded, hurt,
By an unconscionable Flirt!

Then take from man his fairest gift,
The love that should his soul uplift,
The fullness of his life's desire;
And leave him, hapless, to expire!
Not this for me, fair careless dame!
My life is far too dull and tame
For such gay birds with plumage bright,
Who find Despair a pleasing sight.

'T is well enough to gaze afar,
And watch the glimmer of thy star.
Go forth, to revel in the air,
With those that love yet do not care.

1902.

Printed at the Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.

IN PREPARATION

The following volumes to appear successively when complete, uniform with "The Spirit of Love and other Poems."

LOVE SONNETS.

This volume is expected to be ready for publication during 1907.

ODES AND ELEGIES.

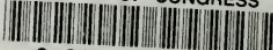
About one half the number of these poems have already been written. The remainder, it is expected, will be completed in time for publication during 1908.

DIALOGUES AND SATIRES.

It is hoped that this volume will be complete and ready for publication in 1909.

DEC 5 1906

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